Aug 27, 2022

TechLife NEWS

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APPLE WARNS OF SECURITY FLAW

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FOR FIRST TIME, STREAMERS RULE BROADCAST, CABLE NETWORKS

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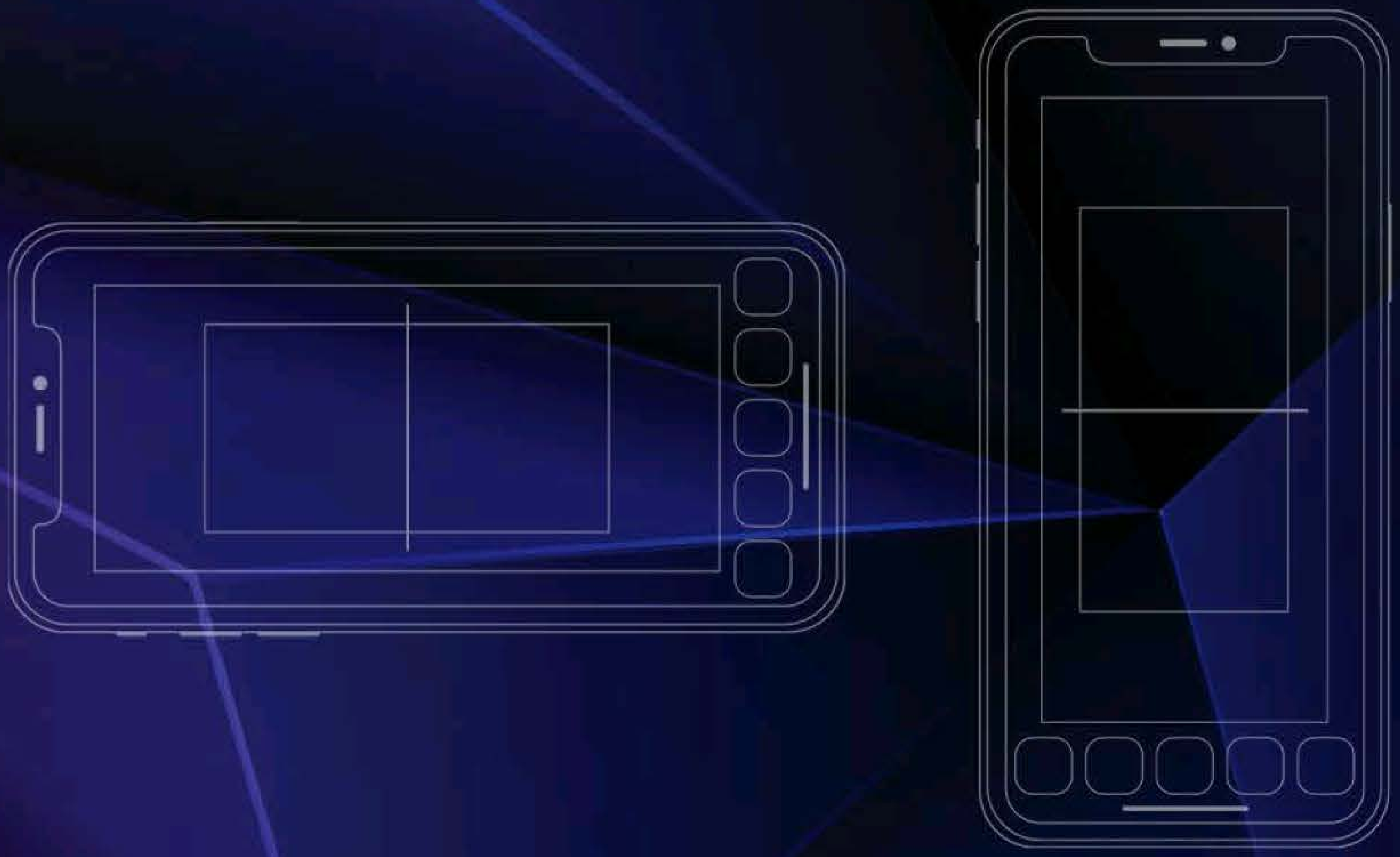

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FLEET OF HYDROGEN PASSENGER TRAINS BEGINS SERVICE IN GERMANY

654 102
ALSTOM
ALSTOM

German officials launched what they say is the world's first fleet of hydrogen-powered passenger trains this week, replacing 15 diesel trains that previously operated on nonelectrified tracks in the state of Lower Saxony.

The 14 trains use hydrogen fuel cells to generate electricity that powers the engines. The German government has backed expanding the use of hydrogen as a clean alternative to fossil fuels.

State governor Stephan Weil said the 93-million-euro ($92 million) project was an "excellent example" for Lower Saxony's efforts to make its economy greener.

The trains manufactured by French company Alstom are operated by regional rail company LNVG on routes between the northern towns of Cuxhaven, Bremerhaven, Bremervoerde and Buxtehude.

Alstom says the Coradia iLint trains have a range of up to 1,000 kilometers (621 miles) and a maximum speed of 140 kph (87 mph). By using hydrogen produced with renewable energy the trains will save 1.6 million liters (more than 422,000 gallons) of diesel fuel a year.

The hydrogen is currently produced as a byproduct in chemical processes, but German specialty gas company Linde plans to manufacture it locally using only renewable energy within three years.

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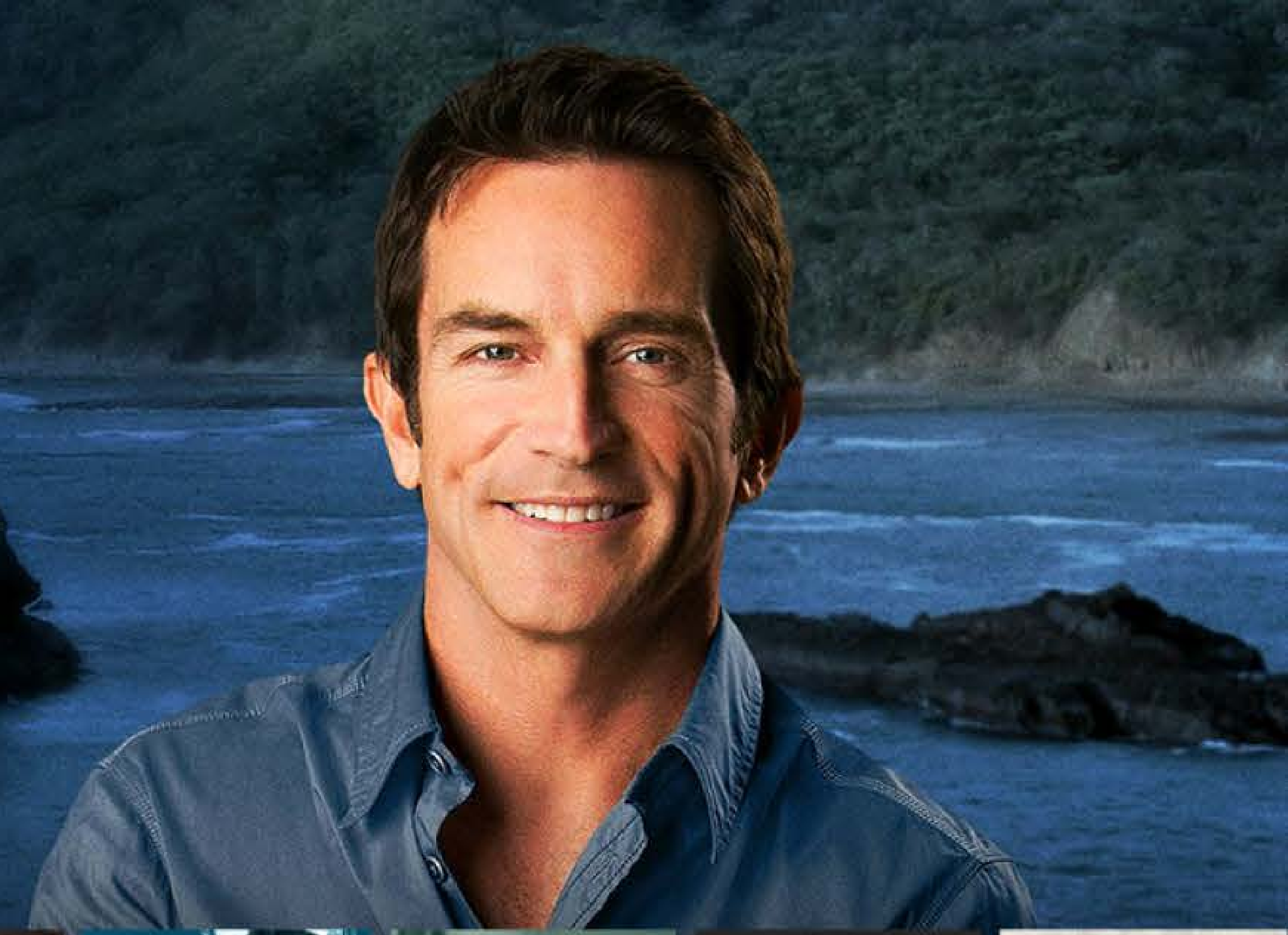

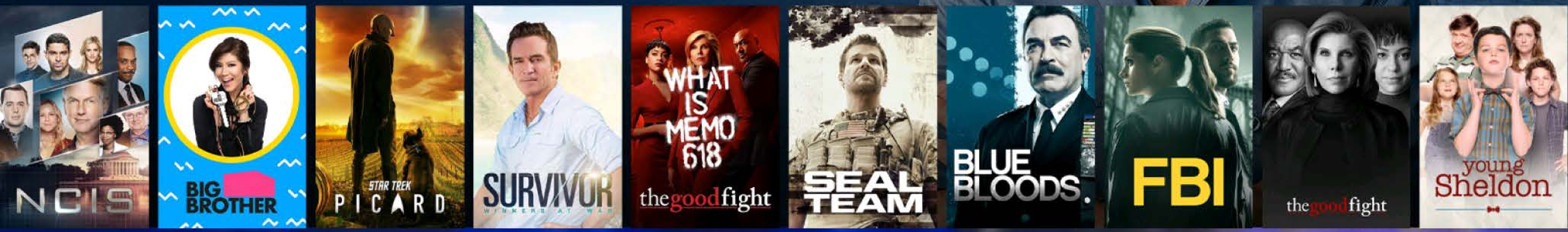
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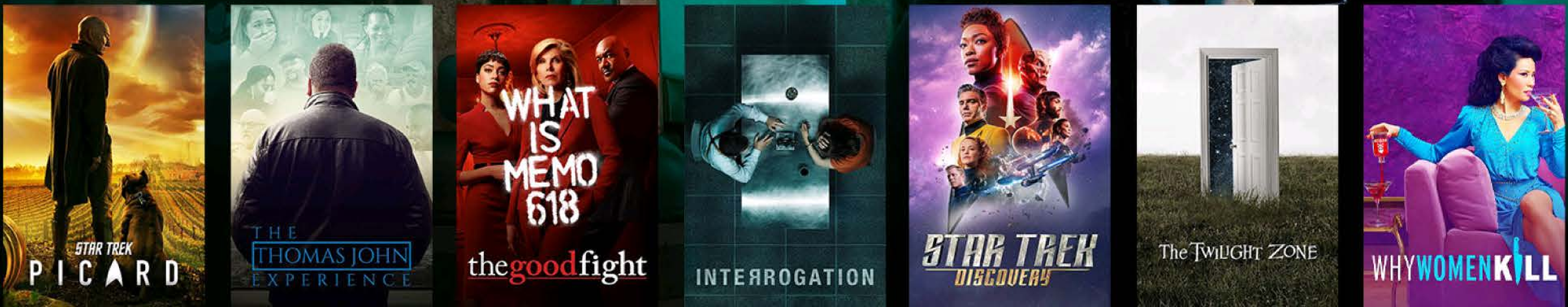
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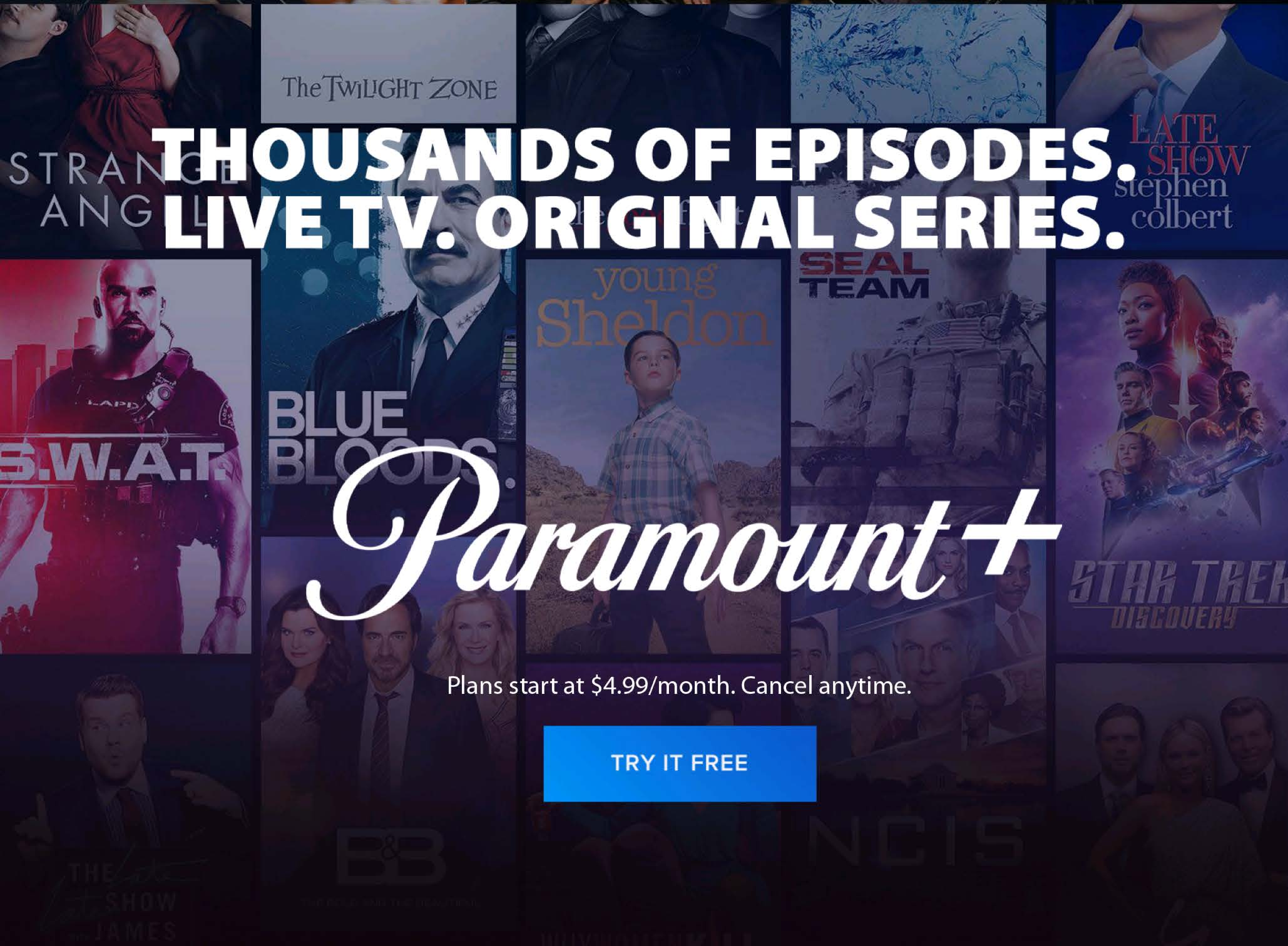
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CALIFORNIA POISED TO PHASE OUT SALE OF NEW GAS-POWERED CARS

California is poised to set a 2035 deadline for all new cars, trucks and SUVs sold in the state to be powered by electricity or hydrogen, an ambitious step that will reshape the U.S. car market by speeding the transition to more climate-friendly vehicles.

The California Air Resources Board voted Thursday, which sets the most aggressive roadmap in the nation for moving away from gas-powered cars. It doesn't eliminate such vehicles, however.

People can continue driving gas-fueled vehicles and purchasing used ones after 2035. The plan also allows for one-fifth of sales after 2035 to be plug-in hybrids that can run on batteries and gas.

But it sets a course for ultimately ending the era of filling up at the local gas station. The switch from gas to electric cars will drastically reduce emissions and air pollutants. The transition may be painful in parts of the state that are still dominated by oil; California remains the seventh-largest oil producing state, though its output it falling as the state pushes forward with its climate goals.

"The climate crisis is solvable if we focus on the big, bold steps necessary to stem the tide of carbon pollution," Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom said Wednesday. He announced the 2035 goal two years ago and regulators have spent the time since then working out the details of what Newsom termed "the action we must take if we're serious about leaving this planet better off for future generations."

There are practical hurdles to overcome to reach the goal, notably enough reliable power and charging stations. California now has about 80,000 stations in public places, far short of the 250,000 it wants by 2025. The Alliance for Automotive Innovation, which represents many major car makers, flagged the lack of infrastructure, access to materials needed to make batteries, and supply chain issues among the challenges to meeting the state's timeline.

"These are complex, intertwined and global issues well beyond the control of either (the California Air Resources Board) or the auto

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industry," John Bozzella, the group's president, said in a statement.

Though the state makes up 10% of the U.S. car market, it's home to 43% of the nation's 2.6 million registered plug-in vehicles, according to the air board.

California climate officials say the state's new policy will be the world's most ambitious because it sets clear benchmarks for ramping up electric vehicle sales over the next dozen years. By 2026, for example, one-third of new cars sold must be electric. About 16% of cars sold in California in the first three months of this year were electric.

The European Parliament in June backed a plan to effectively prohibit the sale of gas and diesel cars in the 27-nation bloc by 2035, and Canada has mandated the sale of zero-emission cars by the same year. The Chinese province of Hainan said this week it would do the same by 2030.

In the U.S., Massachusetts, Washington and New York are among states that have set goals to transform their car markets or have already committed to following California's new rules.

California has historically been granted permission by the U.S. Environmental Protection agency to set its own tailpipe emissions rules for cars, and 17 other states follow some or all of its policies.

The new electric vehicle rules will also require federal approval, which is considered likely with President Joe Biden in the White House. A future Republican president, though, could challenge California's authority to set its own car standards, as the Trump administration did.

Indeed, the new commitment comes as California works to maintain reliable electricity while it moves away from gas-fired power plants in favor of solar, wind and other cleaner sources of energy. Earlier this year, top energy officials warned the state could run out of power during the hottest days of summer, which happened briefly in August 2020.

That hasn't happened yet this year. But Newsom is pushing to keep open the state's last-remaining nuclear plant beyond its planned closer in 2025, and the state may turn to diesel generators or natural gas plants as a backup when the grid is strained.

Adding more car chargers will put a higher demand on the energy grid.

Ensuring access to charging stations is also key to ramping up electric vehicle sales. The infrastructure bill passed by Congress last year provides $5 billion for states to build charges every 50 miles (80 kilometers) along interstate highways. Newsom, meanwhile, has pledged to spend billions to boost zero-emission vehicle sales, including by adding chargers in low-income neighborhoods.

Driving an electric vehicle long distances today, even in California, requires careful planning about where to stop and charge, said Mary Nichols, former chair of the California Air Resources Board. The money from the state and federal government will go along way to boosting that infrastructure and making electric cars a more convenient option, she said.

"This is going to be a transformative process and the mandate for vehicle sales is only one piece of it," she said.

Though hydrogen is a fuel option under the new regulations, cars that run on fuel-cells have made up less than 1% of car sales in recent years.

Both the state and government have rebates for thousands of dollars to offset the cost of buying electric cars, and the rules have incentives for car makers to make used electric vehicles available to low- and middle-income people. Over the past 12 years, California has provided more than $1 billion in rebates for the sale of 478,000 electric, plug-in or hybrid vehicles, according to the air board.

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‘PRE-BUNKING’ SHOWS PROMISE IN FIGHT AGAINST MISINFORMATION

Soon after the Russian invasion, the hoaxes began. Ukrainian refugees were taking jobs, committing crimes and abusing handouts. The misinformation spread rapidly online throughout Eastern Europe, sometimes pushed by Moscow in an effort to destabilize its neighbors.

It’s the kind of swift spread of falsehoods that has been blamed in many countries for increased polarization and an erosion of trust in democratic institutions, journalism and science.

The Daily Times
FAKE NEWS
DON'T READ ALL ABOUT IT. STOP. USE REASON.

But countering or stopping misinformation has proven elusive.

New findings from university researchers and Google, however, reveal that one of the most promising responses to misinformation may also be one of the simplest.

In a paper published this week in the journal Science Advances, the researchers detail how short online videos that teach basic critical thinking skills can make people better able to resist misinformation.

The researchers created a series of videos similar to a public service announcement that focused on specific misinformation techniques — characteristics seen in many common false claims that include emotionally charged language, personal attacks or false comparisons between two unrelated items.

Researchers then gave people a series of claims and found that those who watched the videos were significantly better at distinguishing false information from accurate information.

It's an approach called "pre-bunking" and it builds on years of research into an idea known as inoculation theory that suggests exposing people to how misinformation works, using harmless, fictional examples, can boost their defenses to false claims.

With the findings in hand, Google plans to roll out a series of pre-bunking videos soon in Eastern Europe focused on scapegoating, which can be seen in much of the misinformation about Ukrainian refugees. That focus was chosen by Jigsaw, a division of Google that works to find new ways to address misinformation and extremism.

The Manhattan
Hussle
HOLLYWOOD ELITES USE BABY BLOOD TO GET HIGH!

Misinformation
Misinformation
Misinformation
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Misinformation

Image: Altigan Ozdil

"We have spent quite a bit of time and energy studying the problem," said Beth Goldberg, Jigsaw's head of research and one of the authors of the paper. "We started thinking: How can we make the users, the people online, more resilient to misinformation?"

The two-minute clips then demonstrate how these tactics can show up in headlines, or social media posts, to make a person believe something that isn't true.

They're surprisingly effective. Subjects who viewed the videos were found to be significantly better at distinguishing false claims from accurate information when tested by the researchers. The same positive results occurred when the experiment was replicated on YouTube, where nearly 1 million people viewed the videos.

Researchers are now investigating how long the effects last, and whether "booster" videos can help sustain the benefits.

Earlier findings have suggested that online games or tutorials that teach critical thinking skills can also improve resiliency to misinformation. But videos, which could be played alongside online advertisements, are likely to reach many more people, said Jon Roozenbeek, a Cambridge University professor and one of the authors of the study.

Other authors included researchers at the University of Bristol in the U.K. and the University of Western Australia.

Google's effort will be one of the largest real-world tests of pre-bunking so far. The videos will be released on YouTube, Facebook and TikTok,

Image: Thibault Camus

1

in Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovakia. All three countries have accepted large numbers of Ukrainian refugees and their citizens could be vulnerable to misinformation about refugees.

Jigsaw CEO Yasmin Green said the work on prebunking is intended to complement Google's other efforts to reduce the spread of misinformation: "As the scourge of misinformation grows, there's a lot more we can do to provide people with prompts and features that help them stay safe and informed online."

While journalistic fact checks can be effective in debunking a particular piece of misinformation, they're time and labor intensive. By focusing on characteristics of misinformation in general instead of specific claims, pre-bunking videos can help a person spot false claims on a wider variety of topics.

Another method, content moderation by social media companies, can often be inconsistent. While platforms like Facebook and Twitter often remove misinformation that violates their rules, they're also criticized for failing to do more. Other platforms like Telegram or Gab boast a largely hands-off approach to misinformation.

Social media content moderation and journalistic fact checks can also run the risk of alienating those who believe the misinformation. They might also be ignored by people who already distrust legitimate news outlets.

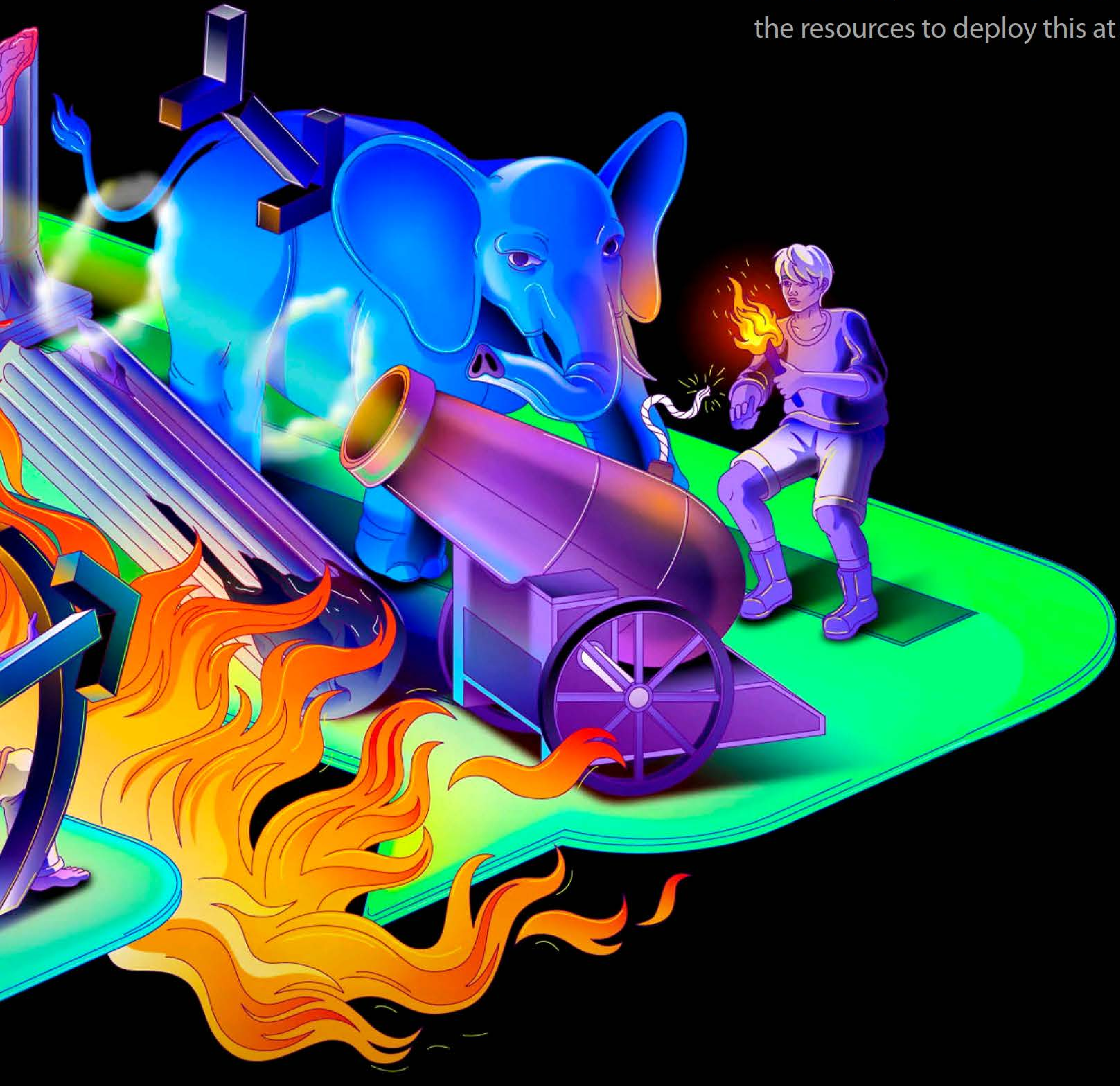
"The word fact checking itself has become politicized," Roozenbeek said.

Pre-bunking videos, however, don't target specific claims, and they make no assertions about what is true or not. Instead, they teach

the viewer how false claims work in general — whether it's a claim about elections or NASA's moon landings, or the latest outbreak of the avian flu.

That transferability makes pre-bunking a particularly effective way of confronting misinformation, according to John Cook, a research professor at Australia's Monash University who has created online games that teach ways to spot misinformation.

"We've done enough research to know this can be effective," Cook said. "What we need now is the resources to deploy this at scale."



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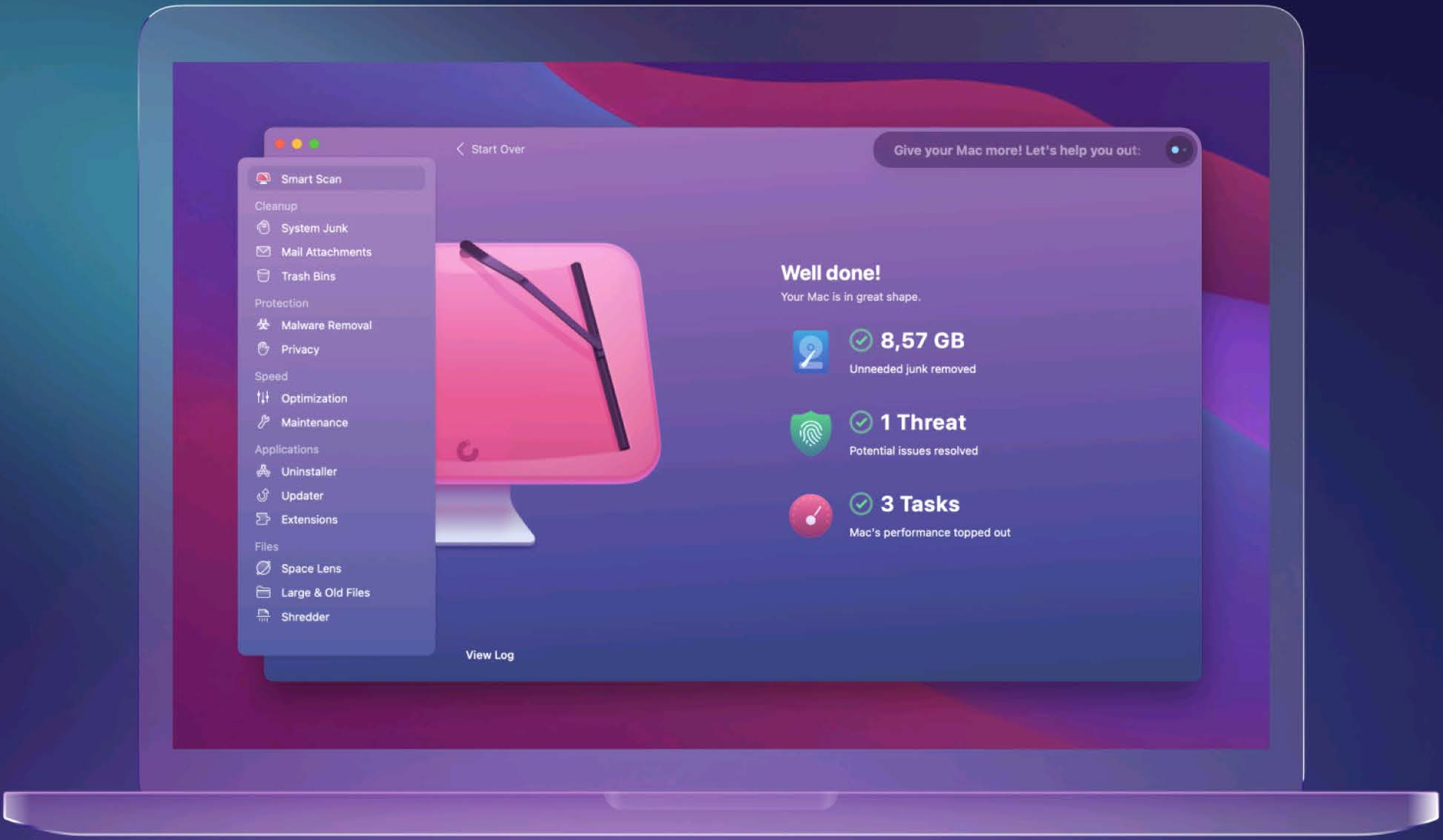
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FIVE CARS THAT WON'T BE AROUND FOR 2023

The collection of new vehicles on sale is constantly changing with all of the latest introductions and discontinuations. While the all-new vehicles get plenty of hype, automakers are typically quiet when they cease production of a vehicle. As such, shoppers often don't realize they're gone until it's too late.

These discontinued models often get the ax because of slow sales. But not all are bad choices. Experts highlight five notable models that are on the way out. This list is sorted by the manufacturer's suggested retail price and includes the destination charge.

HYUNDAI ACCENT

The Accent has long served as Hyundai's smallest and most affordable model. The sedan, which was once offered as a hatchback, had a long run in the United States, but shoppers have mostly lost interest in small cars. The Hyundai Venue, a small SUV, will become the brand's lowest-priced vehicle once the Accent is discontinued.

The current Accent is a fine choice for an inexpensive commuter car or perhaps as a young driver's first car. It has a comfortable ride and a roomy cabin, two qualities that aren't always found in a vehicle at this price point. There are of course some drawbacks, including limited tech features and unsupportive seats. If you're considering one, opt for the SEL trim for its larger touchscreen and Apple CarPlay and Android Auto smartphone connectivity.

Starting manufacturer's suggested retail price: $17,740

Accent

STORM

FORD ECOSPORT

The EcoSport has only been available since the 2018 model year and spent all of its time toward the bottom of SUV rankings. And since little SUVs don't sell as well, it's no surprise Ford is dropping it. It's the brand's smallest and most inexpensive SUV. When the EcoSport is discontinued after 2022, the much better Escape will be Ford's smallest SUV.

If you're in the market for a small SUV, you should probably look at one of the EcoSport's rivals, or if you have the budget for it, get the Escape instead. When tested, our team complained about its poor ride quality, disappointing fuel economy and lack of advanced driver aids. Plenty of cargo space and an easy-to-use touchscreen interface are the only high points here.

Starting MSRP: $23,335

BUICK ENCORE

Like the EcoSport above, the Encore is a tiny and affordable SUV that Buick introduced for the 2013 model year in hopes of attracting younger buyers to the brand. It was never very competitive, however. Don't let the badge fool you: The Encore isn't as luxurious as other Buicks, hence its relatively low price tag. We like its quiet cabin and outward visibility, but when compared to rivals, it lacks cargo space and features and isn't as fuel-efficient.

There is a silver lining, however. A few years ago Buick introduced the similar-size Encore GX. The GX might sound like a trim level, but it's actually a completely different model, and it's a more compelling choice for a small SUV thanks to its roomy interior and balanced ride and handling. If you're shopping Buicks, look for the GX model.

Starting MSRP: $25,795

MERCEDES A-CLASS

It's unfortunate that Mercedes decided to discontinue the A-Class after the 2022 model year because it's one of highest-rated small luxury sedans. Fortunately, the very similar CLA sedan and GLA SUV will be around and are similar in size and price. They are also just as good and have almost identical interiors and features.

The A-Class is currently Mercedes' most affordable model yet boasts the excellent build quality, luxury and tech found in the brand's larger and more expensive models. It's entertaining to drive and comfortable and it has a helpful voice-command system. As with most small sedans, rear legroom is a little tight, but on the whole, this is a great entry-level luxury sedan to pick up on its way out.

Starting MSRP: $35,000

TOYOTA AVALON

You might think the discontinuation of the Avalon will make non-luxury large sedans even more scarce, but it’s being replaced by a high-riding hybrid sedan called the Crown. The departure of the Avalon might come as a shock to some because it’s been around since the mid-1990s and has been a reliable source of transportation for many families over the years.

The Avalon performed well. Not only is it very comfortable, but it’s also very enjoyable to drive thanks to its responsive handling, strong V6 and smooth-shifting transmission. The large sedan also boasts a sophisticated interior and offers plenty of tech. One of its few faults is its limited amount of rear headroom.

Starting MSRP: $37,920

With many shoppers preferring sizable SUVs and crossovers, it’s no surprise that small SUVs and sedans make up this list. That narrows down the number of choices for shoppers, but you can’t blame automakers for delivering what’s in demand.

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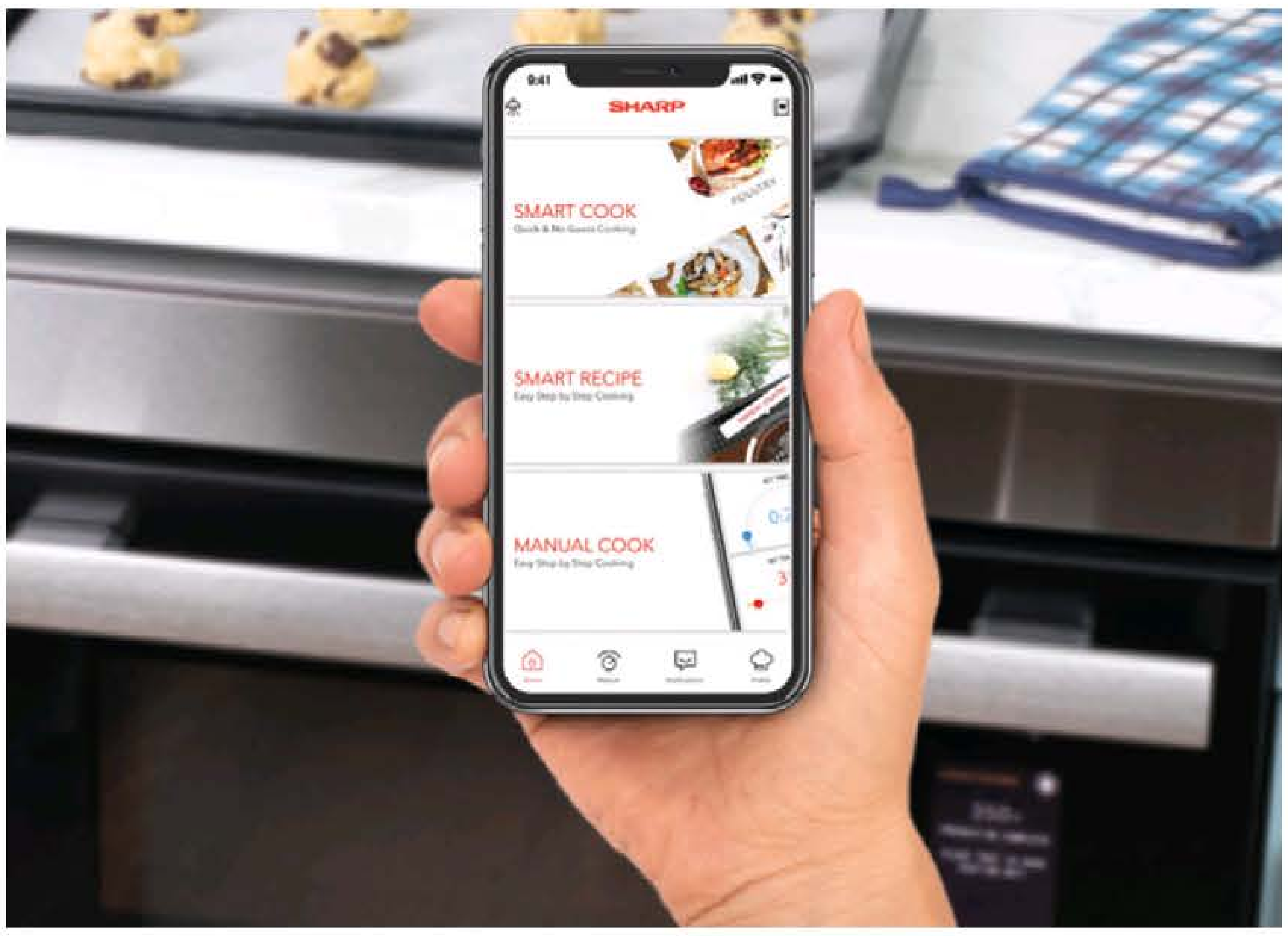

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ACADEMY CEO BILL KRAMER LOOKS TO FUTURE OF THE OSCARS

Bill Kramer has been thinking about the future of the Oscars since he was named CEO of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences earlier this summer.

The former head of the Academy Museum of Motion Pictures knows some things must change, that they have to evolve and grow their fanbase. But he's optimistic: He's already deep in talks with Oscars broadcaster ABC and potential producing partners and is committed to having a host again in 2023. And he's especially ready to "move forward" from the slap and to have a show that celebrates cinema, he told a small group of reporters this week. At the Oscars earlier this year, Will Smith came on stage and slapped Chris Rock.

The show is immensely important not just for Hollywood but for the academy itself. The revenue from the Oscars accounts for well over half of the organization's annual income. And it's been under increasing scrutiny from both the public, for everything from its runtime to the kinds of films that get nominated, and its broadcasting partner for its ratings. Even academy members themselves have drawn criticism, most recently for the decision to present some of the awards before the live broadcast in an effort to streamline the show.

At the next Oscars in March 2023, Kramer said he wants to see "all crafts equitably acknowledged" on the show and that "there are many ways to do that." It's just one of the many topics being discussed with broadcaster ABC.

One of the evergreen conundrums is how to attract new viewers and appeal to the masses without alienating the ones who love the Oscars the most. Efforts to infuse the show with more mainstream movies from the "fan favorite" award earlier this year or the short-lived "popular" Oscar have been mercilessly mocked. To some, montages are a waste of time. To others, they're the heart of the Academy Awards.

"We have been talking to ABC, our partners on the show, and really thinking about what this year means for us," Kramer said. "It's our 95th anniversary. We want to return to a show that has a reverence for film and 95 years of the Oscars. It's a moment to really reflect on our membership, all craft areas, our changing industry, our fans.

There are ways to do that that are entertaining and authentic and that are tied to our mission to honor excellence in moviemaking. I don't think that's mutually exclusive."

Part of that strategy, Kramer said, is using social media and marketing to create more familiarity around first-run movies leading up to nominations and the awards. The hope is that come Oscar night, audiences and academy members are invested whether "Top Gun: Maverick" is nominated or not.

They are also making progress in selecting producers for next year's show. For the past several years, producers have changed with each show, but Kramer said he hopes to forge a multi-year partnership with people who have expertise in live television production. Asked for some examples of past Oscars that have worked, Kramer cited the Bill Condon-produced 81st Oscars with Hugh Jackman as host, as well as the Donna Gigliotti-produced 91st Oscars, which he said was "efficient and successful."

But a focus on the Oscars show doesn't mean he's not working to advance the academy's diversity initiatives, from its membership to its year-round talent development programs. Starting next year, best picture hopefuls will have to meet the Academy's new inclusion standards for the 96th Academy Awards in 2024. The organization has been working with studios and filmmakers for the past two years to ensure that everyone understands the standards. He said all the best picture nominees from earlier this year would have qualified.

"We don't want to legislate art, that's not what this is about. We want filmmakers to continue to make the films they want to make," Kramer said. "We don't want this to be onerous or punitive. We want this to be collaborative. Seeing that the best picture nominees of this past year all qualify gives us great hope that our conversations and partnership with studios and distributors and filmmakers is working and is not creating a challenge."

One of Kramer's primary concerns is continuing to diversify the academy's revenue base. At one time, the Academy Awards and all the contracts that surround the Oscars show made up 95% of the organization's annual income. Now, with the Academy Museum of Motion Pictures and its ticket sales, retail store and restaurant combined with corporate sponsorships, foundation support and individual giving, the Oscars now make up around 70% of that income. They've forged successful partnerships with the likes of Rolex and Bloomberg Philanthropies, who "believe in the future of the arts and culture and cinema," Kramer said.

"We brought in more than $20 million last year tied to the museum in new revenue. How do we build upon that success connected to the academy to create diversified streams of support?" Kramer said. "That doesn't keep me up at night in a negative way, but I'm excited about what that means because it will help ensure the future of the academy."

The 95th Academy Awards will be broadcast live from Los Angeles on March 12.

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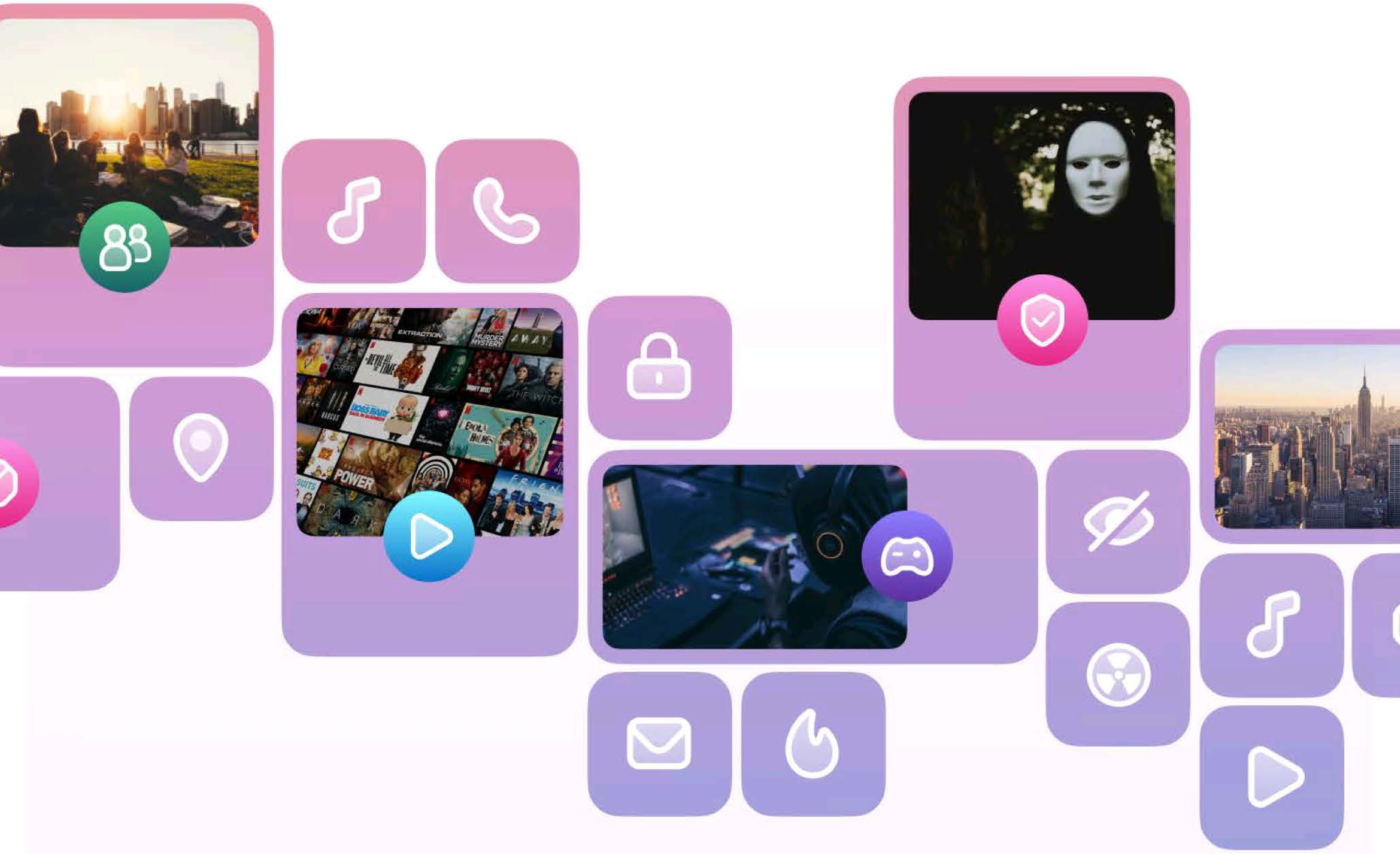

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BIDEN'S STUDENT LOAN PLAN: WHAT WE KNOW (AND WHAT WE DON'T)

President Joe Biden said this week that many Americans can have up to $10,000 in federal student loan debt forgiven. That amount increases to $20,000 if they qualified for Pell grants. Here's what we know so far and what it means for people with outstanding student loans:

WHO QUALIFIES FOR STUDENT LOAN FORGIVENESS?

You qualify to have up to $10,000 forgiven if your loan is held by the Department of Education and you make less than $125,000 individually or $250,000 for a family. If you received Pell grants, which are reserved for undergraduates with the most significant financial need, you can have up to $20,000 forgiven. If you are a current borrower and a dependent student, you will be eligible for relief based on your parents' income, rather than your own.

WILL THE STUDENT LOAN PAYMENT FREEZE BE EXTENDED?

The payment freeze will be extended one last time, until Dec. 31. The freeze started in 2020 as a way to help people struggling financially during the COVID-19 pandemic and it's been extended several times since. It was set to expire Aug. 31.

Interest rates will remain at 0% until repayments start. Under an earlier extension announced in April, people who were behind on payments before the pandemic automatically will be put in good standing.

HOW DO I APPLY FOR STUDENT LOAN FORGIVENESS?

Details of that have not been announced, but keep an eye on the federal student aid website for more details in coming days.

DOES GRADUATE STUDENT DEBT QUALIFY?

Yes, federal student loans taken out to cover graduate degrees qualify for forgiveness.

WHAT IF MY STUDENT LOAN BALANCE INCLUDES A LOT OF INTEREST?

The interest itself is considered part of the balance for purposes of this program. Forgiveness will remove $10,000 from the total balance you owe.

WILL I HAVE TO PAY TAXES ON THE AMOUNT I'M FORGIVEN?

No. Congress eliminated taxes on loan forgiveness through 2025.

WHAT'S A PELL GRANT AND HOW DO I KNOW IF I HAVE ONE?

Roughly 27 million borrowers who qualified for Pell grants will be eligible to receive up to $20,000 in forgiveness under the Biden plan.

Pell grants are special government scholarships for lower-income Americans, who currently can receive up to $ $6,895 annually for roughly six years.

Nearly every Pell Grant recipient came from a family that made less than $60,000 a year, according to the Department of Education, which said Pell grant recipients typically experience more challenges repaying their debt than other borrowers.

Pell grants themselves don't generally have to be paid back, but recipients typically take out additional student loans.

"This additional relief for Pell borrowers is also an important piece of racial equity in cancellation," said Kat Welbeck, Civil Rights Counsel for the Student Borrower Protection Center. "Because student debt exacerbates existing inequities, the racial wealth gap means that students of color, especially those that are Black and Latino, are more likely to come from low-wealth households, have student debt, and borrow in higher quantities."

To find out if you have a Pell grant, check any emails you've received that describe your FAFSA award.

HOW MANY PEOPLE WILL THIS HELP?

About 43 million Americans have federal student debt, with an average balance of $37,667, according to federal data. A third of those owe less than $10,000. Half owe less than $20,000. The total amount of federal student debt is more than $1.6 trillion.

WHAT IF I'VE ALREADY PAID OFF MY STUDENT LOANS — WILL I SEE RELIEF?

The debt forgiveness is expected to apply only to those currently holding student debt. But if you've voluntarily made payments since March 2020, when payments were paused, you can request a refund for those payments, according to the Federal Office of Student Aid. Contact your loan servicer to request a refund.

WILL STUDENT LOAN FORGIVENESS DEFINITELY HAPPEN?

The White House could face lawsuits over the plan, because Congress has never given the

SEAL OF THE PRESIDENT OF

president the explicit authority to cancel debt. The Biden administration is tying its authority to the coronavirus pandemic and to a 2003 law aimed at providing help to members of the military. We don't know yet how any legal action might impact the timetable for student loan forgiveness.

WHAT REPAYMENT PLAN IS THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PROPOSING?

The Department of Education has proposed a repayment plan that would cap monthly payments at no more than 5% of a borrower's discretionary income, down from 10% now. Borrowers will need to apply for the repayment plan if it's approved, which could take a year or more.

For example, under the proposal, a single borrower making $38,000 a year would pay $31 a month, according a government press release.

The amount considered non-discretionary will also be increased, through the department has not said how much.

Discretionary income usually refers to what you have left after covering necessities like food and rent, but for student loan repayment purposes it's calculated using a formula that takes into account the difference between a borrower's annual income and the federal poverty line, along with family size and geographic location.

"What's tough about income-driven repayment is that it does not take into account your other liabilities, such as your rent payment," said Kristen Ahlenius, a financial counselor at Your Money Line, which provides financial literacy training. "If someone's living paycheck to paycheck and their

rent is taking up half of their paycheck and then their car payment takes the other, they have to choose. Unfortunately, income-driven repayment doesn't take that into consideration, but it is an option."

Student Debt Relief offers a calculator to help determine your discretionary income.

WHAT IF I CAN'T AFFORD TO PAY EVEN WITH LOAN FORGIVENESS?

Once payments resume, borrowers who can't pay risk delinquency and eventually default. That can hurt your credit rating and mean you're not eligible for additional aid.

If you're struggling to pay, check if you qualify for an income-driven repayment plan. You can find out more here.

The plan Biden announced Wednesday also includes a proposal that would allow people with undergraduate loans to cap repayment at 5% of their monthly income. Proposals like this one can take a year or more to be implemented, and it's not clear what the fine print will be.

If you have worked for a government agency or a non-profit organization, you could also be eligible for the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program, which you can read more about here.

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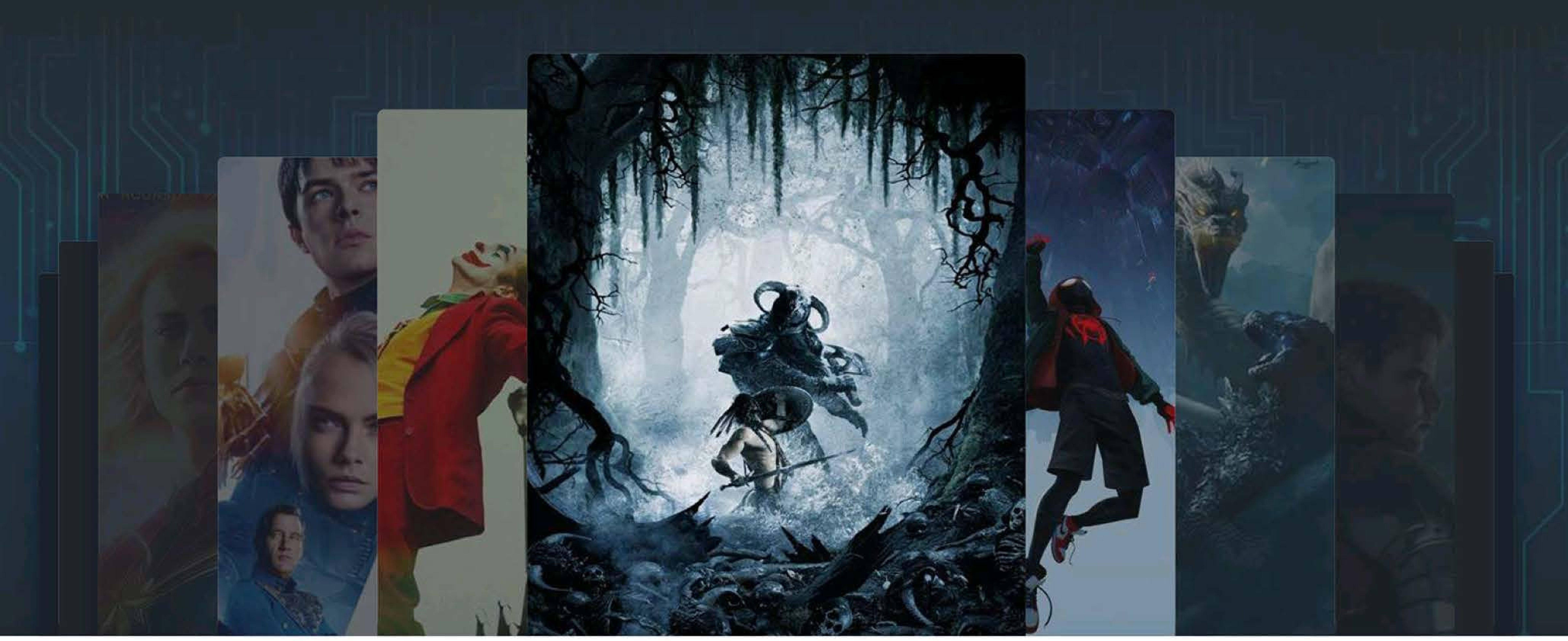

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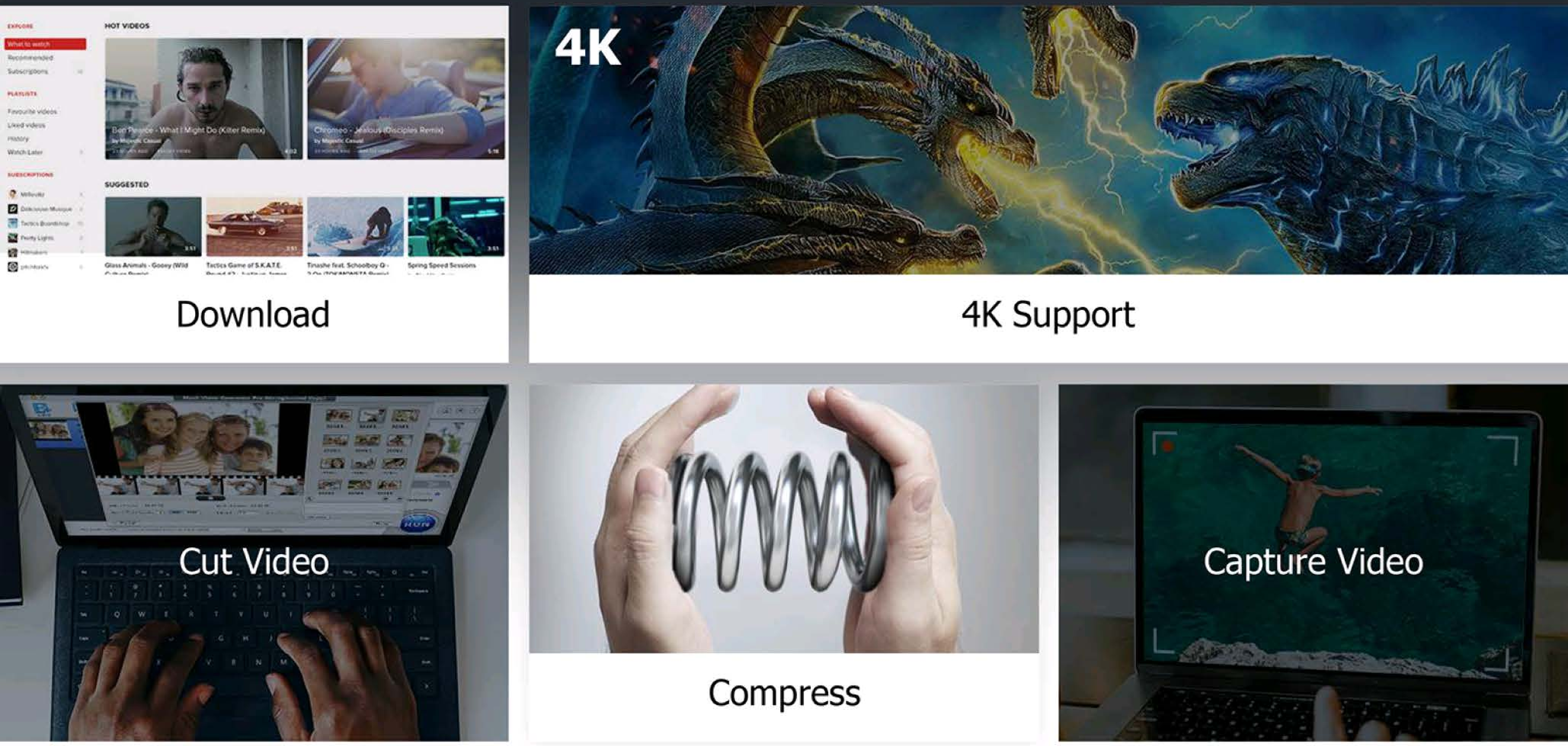
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FOR 1ST MONTH EVER, STREAMERS RULE BROADCAST, CABLE NETWORKS

This summer has been a breakthrough for streaming, with the time viewers spent watching services like Netflix and Hulu outpacing broadcast and cable television networks in July for the first month ever.

Viewers spent 35% of their time with streamers, 34% on cable networks and 22% watching broadcast television last month, the Nielsen company said. Video on demand or DVD playback accounted for much of the other time.

July is an unusual month — broadcast TV is essentially on vacation with little live sports or scripted programming and a prime-time schedule

House of the Dragon | Official Trailer | HBO Max

clogged with game shows — but it's a clear indication of how rapidly the business is changing.

"It was inevitable," said David Bianculli, professor of television studies at Rowan University and critic on NPR's "Fresh Air." "I knew it had to happen, but I didn't know it would happen as quickly as it did."

Streaming's audience share in July was up 23% compared to July 2021, Nielsen said. Broadcast television's share was down 10% and cable down 9%.

Streaming services learned from what cable did in its infancy, using broadcasting's quiet summer months to put forward some of their best programming, said Brian Fuhrer, Nielsen's senior vice president for product strategy and thought leadership. New episodes of "Stranger Things" alone on Netflix accounted for 18 billion minutes of streaming, while "Virgin River" and "The Umbrella Academy" also did well.

Netflix is still the top streamer, but it no longer dominates the field the way it once did. In July, Hulu had strong numbers for "Only Murders in the Building" and "The Bear," while Amazon Prime hit with "The Terminal List" and "The Boys."

With pandemic-related pauses in shooting schedules now largely over, the streamers have a backlog of fresh material, Fuhrer said.

Many viewers became familiar with streaming and added it to their media diets during the pandemic, he said. They haven't looked back. Each week in July had more total minutes of streaming than any other weeks Nielsen has ever counted, with the exception of the week between Christmas and New Year's last year.

NETFLI
hulu

Disney+

Homelander vs. The Butcher and Soldier Boy | The Boys Clip | Prime Video

The return of football games and a new season of fresh scripted shows this fall should boost the broadcast networks, Fuhrer said.

Yet it's hard to see them pushing back to a level of dominance approaching anything in the past. For one thing, media companies that own broadcast networks also have sister streaming services — CBS and Paramount+, NBC and Peacock, for instance — and generally see streaming as the future, he said.

"The networks have collectively decided not only that streaming is the future, but they can't wait to get there as fast as they can," Bianculli said. "They're not doing anything to slow down the charge."

Fuhrer said it will be interesting this fall when large football audiences return to broadcast TV to see whether those networks will spend a great deal of time promoting their own shows.

"This month and the next two to three months may be the most pivotal in the history of television in terms of all the media companies and their strategies," he said.

Some business experts believe streaming services are in a pre-shakeout period, with several trying to establish themselves before the industry learns there are only so many outlets consumers are willing to pay for. The result may be a period of consolidation.

"It's a great time to be a TV viewer," Bianculli said, "and I can't imagine there will ever be a greater time to go into television creatively."

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SUNRUN CEO POWELL SEES NEED FOR MORE ROOFTOP SOLAR

As the head of the nation's largest rooftop solar installer, Mary Powell has a stake in the recently passed Inflation Reduction Act, which includes tax credits to make rooftop solar more affordable.

But the CEO of Sunrun's excitement about the bill's passage goes beyond business. Powell was passionate about climate change long before it was a topic at cocktail parties. Now that President Joe Biden has signed the legislation into law, Powell believes the residential solar industry's growth will accelerate, inching the nation closer to reaching its climate goals.

Powell spoke about the impacts of the Inflation Reduction Act. Answers have been edited for length.

Q: HOW MUCH WILL THE INFLATION REDUCTION ACT BOOST THE SOLAR INDUSTRY'S GROWTH?

A: We are seeing 33% year-over-year growth and incredible customer demand. At the same time, we're still collectively as an industry in only 4% of the 77 million addressable homes.

I think mainstream America is really becoming very aware of the value of solar plus storage plus electric vehicles. So this legislation, it just makes my heart sing, because it means so many more customers who would benefit from having a more affordable, resilient, comfortable future will now be able to do that.

We have to go from 4% of the addressable market to a much higher number to hit the kinds of emissions goals that are in this act.

Q: DOES THE LEGISLATION MAKE IT EASIER FOR LOWER-INCOME AMERICANS TO ACCESS SOLAR ENERGY?

A: Our average customer right now has an average household income of $50,000 to $100,000. So with the additional support in the bill for lower-income, working class families, we really expect that to continue to be the segment that grows by orders of magnitude. So we're really thrilled about that.

This has some really good incentives that will help us grow the multifamily housing work that we're doing now.

So many decisions that affect energy-related emissions are made at the kitchen table. This bill is packed with ways that, when that kitchen table conversation happens, customers can see,

Image: Craig Lee

"Oh, my gosh, I could go with an electric vehicle and save money, I could go with solar and save money. I could get storage and save money." And then you bundle it all together, and the average American in that lower working class could really save $1,800 a year, which when you're balancing school budgets, health care, food costs, etc., that's a meaningful number for so many Americans.

Q: WHY IS INCREASING THE AMOUNT OF SOLAR ON ROOFTOPS SO IMPORTANT TO YOU?

A: Grandpa's grid solution cannot be the sole solution of the future. It is a really important part of the solution.

Some people don't realize the solar we put on roofs in a given year adds up to the amount of capacity of a nuclear power plant. Just think about that. And that's on roofs all across America. So when we pair storage with it, another thing I get super excited about is then how can we leverage those assets working with the grid operators, with the utilities, to actually lower the cost of the grid for all and to make it more resilient for all.

Q: HOW HAVE ATTITUDES ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE EVOLVED SINCE YOU STARTED?

A: I used the word climate change and I basically was told, "Oof. Don't ever use that word. You'll be viewed negatively, people won't take you seriously."

I definitely was the skunk at the garden party at any of the utility events that I went to, talking about customer obsession, talking about innovation, talking about a distributed grid, talking about climate change. So things have changed dramatically.

It's just so exciting to me that now there's so much national and international interest. There's so much money being invested in climate solutions, technology solutions. It's a complete sea change over the last couple of decades. So even though I would have liked this to have moved faster — it's the way I'm wired — I can also see that things have changed pretty dramatically and this bill can be the catalyst for that next really big change we need to make as a society.

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Arcade

New games breathe new life into subscription service

Image: Luca Bravo

It’s been almost three years since Apple launched Arcade, its $4.99/month subscription service for iOS and macOS games. Since then, more than 200 original titles have been added, offering consumers incredible value and revolutionizing the mobile gaming market.

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A GROWING PORTFOLIO OF GAMES

Apple Arcade gives subscribers access to over 200 games with no ads or in-app purchases, a change from the traditionally microtransaction-heavy mobile gaming market. Indeed, it's thanks to games like Candy Crush and Angry Birds that the App Store is what it is today, changing the way we think about spending money on virtual currency. But to help create a more 'wholesome' experience and unlock a new revenue stream, Apple announced in 2019 at a star-studded event that it was to launch a mobile gaming subscription service. Since launch, it's added hundreds of games - many winning awards. The company has remained tight-lipped about the number of people who subscribe to its services, **but one estimate suggests** that the platform has around 30 million users around the world. Remember that many will receive the service for free, as it's given away on a three- or six-month trial basis when buying a new iPhone or Mac. Others **may also receive Arcade as part of Apple One,** effectively making the service a 'free' add-on.

With more than 200 titles to review and try, knowing where to start with Apple Arcade can be a challenge, but it's good to know that Apple's got everyone covered with a game for every taste. Bleak Sword, for example, offers an 8-bit throwback with Dark Souls and Undertale vibes, offering fluid combat and some challenging mechanics that will have you playing for hours on end. On the other end of the spectrum is HEROish, allowing you to play as one of six epic heroes, summon troops, sling spells, and destroy enemy towers to achieve victory in this exciting head-to-head castle defense game. Other engaging titles

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to be released in 2022 include Subway Surfers Tag, a play on the popular Subway Surfers original, and Samorost 3+, which takes users on a peculiar cosmic journey. My Bowling 3D+ offers a realistic bowling experience on your iPhone and Mac, while Air Twister, released in June, takes a modern twist on the swipe shooting genre. Younger children will also love Cooking Mama: Cuisine, allowing them to master the art of cooking from their smartphones.

One of the reasons why Apple has gained a great deal of popularity with its Arcade service is storytelling. Beyond Blue, for example, from E-LINE MEDIA, is almost like a playable BBC Blue Planet documentary, controlling your character as you explore the ocean and its wildlife, learning as you go. Its overarching story is baked deep into the environments, and it works across iPads and Macs, so you can pick up where you left off on another device. Grindstone, on the other hand, is an addictive color-matching boss-fighting puzzler where you'll slay monsters and collect **Grindstones throughout your battle to keep the streak going.** Monster Hunter Stories is another favorite, taking a different spin from the base Monster Hunter game and allowing users to tame and raise monsters, not too dissimilarly to Pokemon. Interestingly, the game was originally released on the Nintendo 3DS and is now an iOS and iPadOS exclusive title.

Hitchhiker is a mystery game that cannot be overlooked. You'll begin by hitchhiking across the country and chatting with drivers as you go. Throughout the journeys, you'll work out where you're going and why - it's an engaging single-player game that takes a different approach. World of Demons from PlatinumGames allows

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you to summon monsters to fight alongside you. Fantasian, from Sakaguchi's Mistwalker studio, is similar to Final Fantasy.

A CONSTANTLY EVOLVING PLATFORM

One of the most exciting things about Apple Arcade is that consumers have access to an ever-evolving platform of games. In August, for example, Apple added four new games to the service, each a sequel to or remix of some of the App Store's most-downloaded and celebrated titles. Amazing Bomberman, My Talking Tom+, Jetpack Joyride 2, and Love You to Bits+ were added to the platform throughout the month, adhering to the company's one new game per week quota. For gamers who want to see upcoming Apple Arcade titles on the App Store, they need to head to the "Arcade" tab in the App Store, then scroll down and choose "See All Games." On the "All Games" screen, they can filter the list by release date and toggle on the switch labeled "Coming Soon" to find upcoming games.

Apple says that games might sometimes leave Apple Arcade on its support pages. If you download a game before it leaves Arcade, you can play the game for at least two weeks after. If you try to launch an Arcade game that is no longer playable, you receive a No Longer Available message." This statement has caused controversy in the technology world: if someone has invested dozens or even hundreds of hours into a game, why should they lose access to it? "After a game leaves Arcade, the game developer might choose to make their game available on the App Store," Apple said in a statement. "These games might vary from the Arcade version. If the developer makes their game available

on the App Store and allows you to load your saved progress, you can pick up where you left off in the Arcade version," the company added, confirming that the post-Arcade experience was down to whether developers wanted to honor the time and commitment a player made. Since this first announcement, a number of titles have disappeared from Arcade, including Spelldrifter, Projection: First Light, Lifeslide, EarthNight, Cardpocalypse, and Dead End Job. According to one **report from MacRumors, Apple signed three-year deals with developers** during the launch of the platform, and some of these contracts are apparently nearing expiry and not being renewed. Rather than take on a new contract with Apple, many of these developers now want to put their games out into the wider world to see how they perform.

Arcade

Whilst Apple Arcade may not have the same standing as services like Netflix or Apple Music just now, it's no doubt changed the way we game forever, pushing us away from predatory in-app purchases and towards more engaging, story-led games that make a real impact.

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DON'T DAWDLE WITH LATEST iPHONE UPDATE. HERE'S WHY AND HOW

Apple regularly issues updates to the software powering the iPhone, and sometimes it's OK to dawdle when it comes to installing them. But that's not the case with its latest — an upgrade that Apple released to close a security hole that could allow hackers to seize control of iPhones and several other popular Apple products.

Security experts are warning that everyone with an iPhone should install the update as soon as possible to protect all the personal information many people store on a device that's become like another appendage for many.

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Without the latest update, a hacker could wrest total control of Apple devices, allowing the intruder to impersonate the true owner and run any software in their name.

The company also issued fixes to block the security threat on iPads and Macs. The flaw may already have been "actively exploited," according to the company, which has had to fix other security problems with the earlier this year.

HOW DO I FIX THIS?

The good news? There's an easy fix: you should be able to find easily. Start with the Settings app, the one with an icon featuring what looks like gears in an old watch. Go into the "General" section, then "Software Update." The page you see will offer simple instructions or, if your device has already updated, a message to that effect.

The whole process typically only takes a few minutes, according to security experts.

WHY IS UPDATING YOUR APPLE DEVICE SO URGENT?

Commercial spyware companies such as Israel's NSO Group are known for identifying and taking advantage of such flaws, exploiting them in malware that surreptitiously infects targets' smartphones, siphons their contents and surveils the targets in real time. It's a risk that's best to avoid.

WHY DOESN'T MY APPLE DEVICE DO THIS FOR ME?

Apple devices are set to automatic updates by default, but it can take some time before they get around to it. Updates also don't usually trigger unless can be done and it usually won't happen unless the iPhone is plugged into a power outlet at the time. It's quicker just to check for the latest updates and do it manually.

DOES THIS MEAN APPLE ISN'T DOING A GOOD JOB PROTECTING ITS USERS?

No. The reality is that hackers are constantly looking for ways to gain unauthorized access to phones, tablets, computers, and other internet-connected devices for a wide range of malicious and illegal purposes. Apple's products tend to be a prime target because they're popular, making them an attractive target.

"Apple is no different to any technology company in that they're constantly dealing with vulnerabilities," said Jamie Collier, senior threat intelligence advisor for the cybersecurity firm Mandiant and an associate fellow at the Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies. "This is really a function of the fact that they're innovating. They're constantly developing, they're constantly improving services, improving their technology, improving their software. That means they're constantly rolling out new things."

WHAT APPLE DEVICES ARE AFFECTED?

The affected devices include the iPhone6S and later models; several models of the iPad, including the 5th generation and later, all iPad Pro models and the iPad Air 2; and Mac computers running MacOS Monterey. The flaw also affects some iPod models.

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HOW DO I UPDATE IPADS AND MACS?

You can update your iPad using the same process outlined above: go to "Settings," click "General" and click "Software Update." On the Mac, go to "System Preferences," then "Software Update."

WHAT'S THE RISK THAT MY PHONE WAS COMPROMISED?

Unless you're a journalist, political dissident or human rights activist, the chances are extremely low. The kinds of spyware created to exploit vulnerabilities of this type are expensive and typically reserved for targeted hacking.

"If you keep the systems updated, you'll be absolutely fine," Collier said. "Typically, when vulnerabilities in, say, phones and iPhones, for instance, are exploited, they tend to be pretty targeted, pretty focused on a small subset of individuals. So we're unlikely to see anything that's really widespread at this stage."

APPLE WARNS OF SECURITY FLAW FOR iPHONES, iPADS AND MACS

Apple disclosed serious security vulnerabilities for iPhones, iPads and Macs that could potentially allow attackers to take complete control of these devices.

Apple released two security reports about the issue, although they didn't receive wide attention outside of tech publications.

Apple's explanation of the vulnerability means a hacker could get "full admin access" to the device. That would allow intruders to impersonate the device's owner and subsequently run any software in their name, said Rachel Tobac, CEO of SocialProof Security.

Security experts have advised users to update affected devices — the iPhone6S and later models; several models of the iPad, including the 5th generation and later, all iPad Pro models and the iPad Air 2; and Mac computers running MacOS Monterey. The flaw also affects some iPod models.

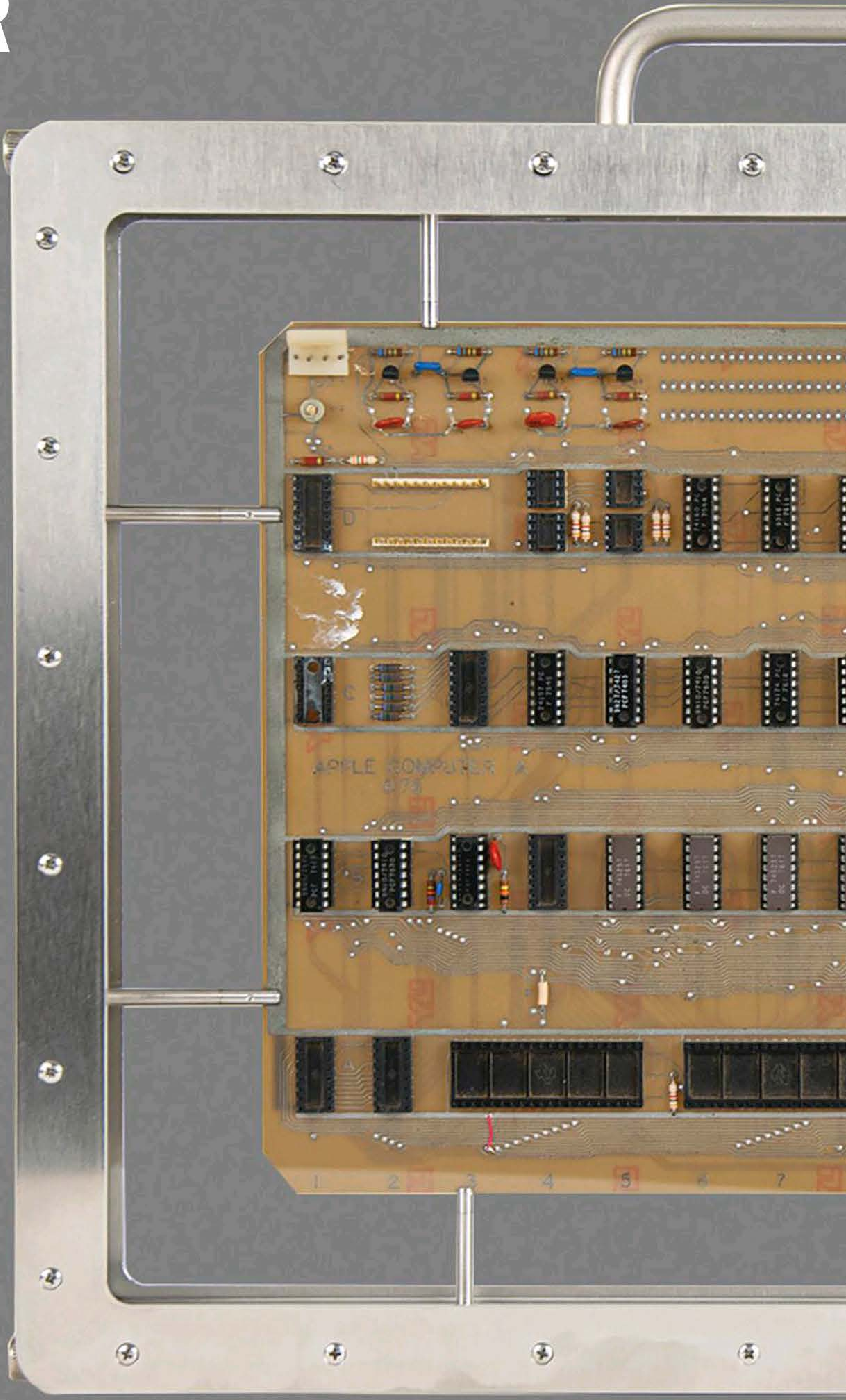
Apple did not say in the reports how, where or by whom the vulnerabilities were discovered. In all cases, it cited an anonymous researcher.

Commercial spyware companies such as Israel's NSO Group are known for identifying and taking advantage of such flaws, exploiting them in malware that surreptitiously infects targets' smartphones, siphons their contents and surveils the targets in real time.

NSO Group has been blacklisted by the U.S. Commerce Department. Its spyware is known to have been used in Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Latin America against journalists, dissidents and human rights activists.

Security researcher Will Strafach said he had seen no technical analysis of the vulnerabilities that Apple has just patched. The company has previously acknowledged similarly serious flaws and, in what Strafach estimated to be perhaps a dozen occasions, has noted that it was aware of reports that such security holes had been exploited.

JOBS' APPLE-1 COMPUTER PROTOTYPE AUCTIONED FOR NEARLY $700K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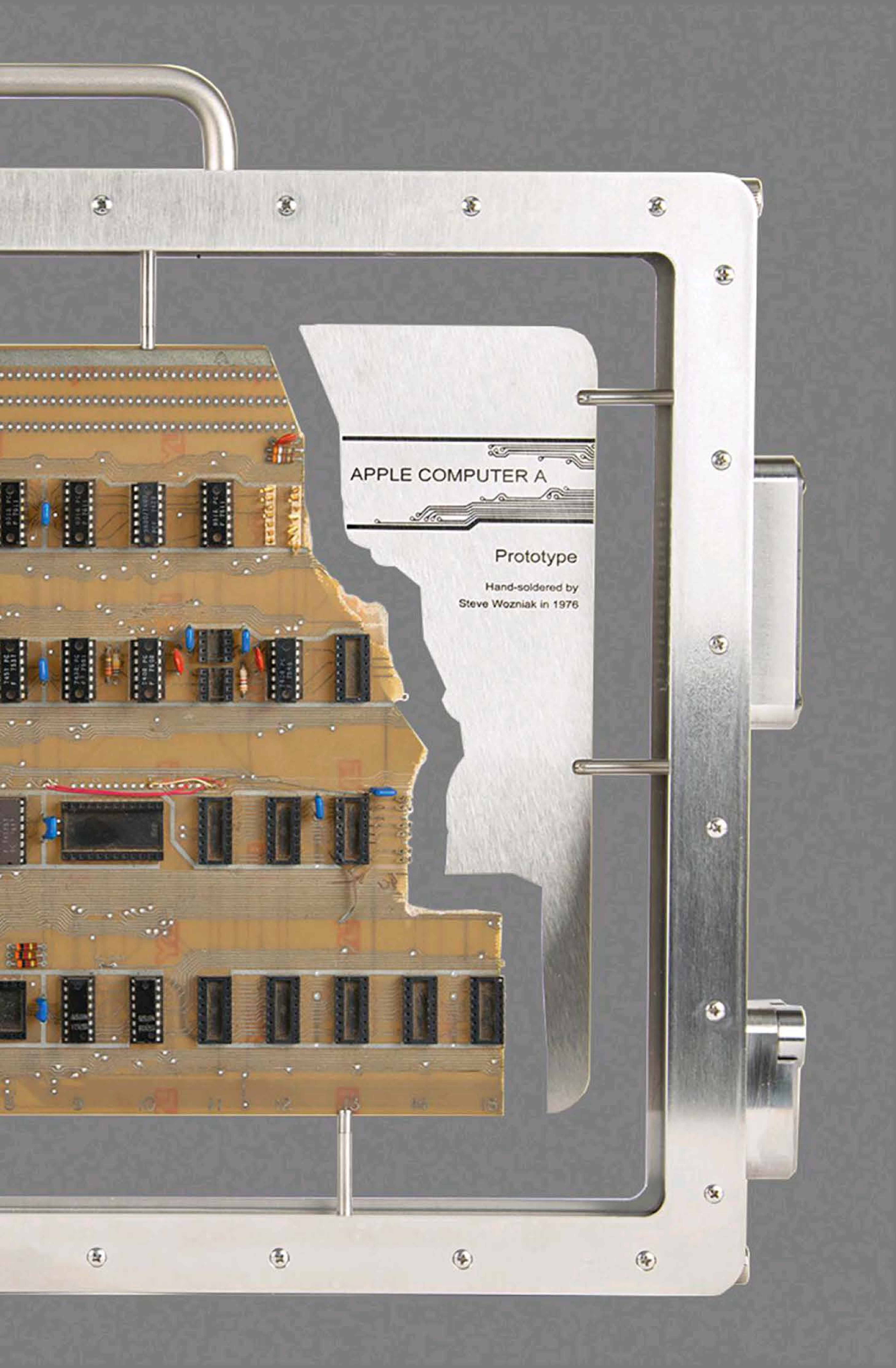
APPLE COMPUTER A
Prototype
Hand-soldered by
Steve Wozniak in 1976

An authenticated Apple-1 Computer prototype from the mid-1970s has sold at auction for nearly $700,000.

The prototype was used by Apple co-founder Steve Jobs in 1976 to demonstrate the Apple-1 to Paul Terrell, owner of The Byte Shop in Mountain View, California, one of the first personal computer stores in the world, Boston-based RR Auction said in a statement.

A Bay Area collector who wishes to remain anonymous made the winning $677,196 bid, the auctioneeer said.

"There is no Apple-1 without this board — it's the holy grail of Steve Jobs and Apple memorabilia," said Bobby Livingston, RR's executive vice president.

The board has been matched to Polaroid photographs taken by Terrell in 1976, showing the prototype in use. It was also examined and authenticated by Apple-1 expert Corey Cohen, whose notarized 13-page report accompanied the sale.

The prototype resided on the Apple Garage property for many years before being given by Jobs to the seller about 30 years ago.

CALIFORNIA LAWMAKERS OK LAWSUITS AGAINST ‘CYBER FLASHERS’

California residents who receive unsolicited sexually graphic material by text, email, app or other electronic means could sue the sender under a bill that state lawmakers sent to Gov. Gavin Newsom.

The bill targets what's known as "cyber flashing," where victims receive such unwelcome surprises often from strangers.

"Just as individuals suffer sexual harassment and abuse in their physical, non-digital lives, there's a growing incidence of individuals being harassed by receiving unsolicited, sexually explicit images and videos including from people they do not know," said Democratic Assemblymember Cecilia Aguiar-Curry when the Assembly approved the bill.

The Assembly passed the measure 76-0 on Thursday and the Senate sent the bill to Newsom on a 37-0 roll call Monday. There was no recorded opposition. Newsom is a Democrat and his office declined comment on whether he will sign the bill into law.

The most common recipients of the unsolicited material are young women, Aguiar-Curry said. The Pew Research Center in a report last year on online harassment found that 33% of women under 35 had been sexually harassed online, three times as often as men.

In a 2017 report, the center said more than half of women age 18-29 had been sent unsolicited explicit images, as had 37% of men in the same age range.

The unsolicited material came in as well by various online dating apps and social media platforms, said Democratic Sen. Connie Leyva, who sought the measure. Sometimes the

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images were even transferred to devices via Apple's AirDrop in public areas to unsuspecting recipients, Leyva said.

The bill would allow recipients to recover at least $1,500 and as much as $30,000 from senders of obscene material who are older than age 18 plus punitive damages and attorney's fees. They could also seek court orders blocking such behavior in the future.

Supporters dropped an earlier version that would have made cyber flashing a crime punishable by a $750 fine for repeat offenders, after public defenders objected.

A Republican lawmaker who experienced cyber flashing herself initially sought a ban in 2019 at the behest of the dating app Bumble. The move then came after Texas made such acts misdemeanor crimes.

The cyber flashing bill is the latest in the California Legislature's attempts to deter related harassment in the electronic age.

State lawmakers in 2013 outlawed "revenge porn," making it a misdemeanor to publicly distribute what were intended to be private intimate photos. And the lawmakers in 2019 allowed lawsuits against those distributing "deepfakes," or false depictions.

WANTED: 7,000 CONSTRUCTION WORKERS FOR INTEL CHIP PLANTS

Ohio's largest-ever economic development project comes with a big employment challenge: how to find 7,000 construction workers in an already booming building environment when there's also a national shortage of people working in the trades.

At hand is the $20 billion semiconductor manufacturing operation near the state's capital, announced by Intel earlier this year. When the two factories, known as fabs, open in 2025, the facility will employ 3,000 people with an average salary of around $135,000.

Before that happens, the 1,000-acre site must be leveled and the semiconductor factories built.

Laborers' Local
423
cgc
EST. 1928

Image: Paul Vernon

Image: Paul Vernon

"This project reverberated nationwide," said Michael Engbert, an Ohio-based official with the Laborers' International Union of North America.

"We don't field calls every day from members hundreds or thousands of miles away asking about transferring into Columbus, Ohio," he said. "It's because they know Intel is coming."

To win the project, Ohio offered Intel roughly $2 billion in incentives, including a 30-year tax break. Intel has outlined $150 million in educational funding aimed at growing the semiconductor industry regionally and nationally.

Construction is expected to accelerate following Congress' approval last month of a package boosting the semiconductor industry and scientific research in a bid to create more high-tech jobs in the United States and help it better compete with international rivals. It includes more than $52 billion in grants and other incentives for the semiconductor industry as well as a 25% tax credit for those companies that invest in chip plants in the U.S.

For the central Ohio project, all 7,000 workers aren't required right away. They're also only a portion of what will be needed as the Intel project transforms hundreds of largely rural acres about 30 minutes east of Columbus.

Just six months after Intel revealed the Ohio operation, for example, Missouri-based VanTrust Real Estate announced it was building a 500-acre (200-hectare) business park next door to house Intel suppliers. The site's 5 million square feet (464,515 square meters) is equivalent to nearly nine football fields. Other projects for additional suppliers are expected.

California-based Intel will rely on lessons learned in building previous semiconductor sites nationally and globally to ensure enough construction workers, the company said in a statement.

"One of Intel's top reasons for choosing Ohio is access to the region's robust workforce," the company said. "It will not be without its challenges, but we are confident there is enough demand that these jobs will be filled."

Labor leaders and state officials acknowledge there's not currently a pool of 7,000 extra workers in central Ohio, where other current projects include a 28-story Hilton near downtown Columbus, a $2 billion addition to The Ohio State University's medical center, and a $365 million Amgen biomanufacturing plant not far from the Intel plant.

And that's not counting at least three new Google and Amazon data centers, plans for a new $200 million municipal courthouse south of downtown Columbus and solar array projects that could require nearly 6,000 construction jobs by themselves.

Federal data shows about 45,000 home and commercial construction workers in central Ohio. That number increased by 1,800 from May 2021 to May 2022, meaning a future deficit given current and future demands.

"I don't know of a single commercial construction company that's not hiring," said Mary Tebeau, executive director of the Builders Exchange of Central Ohio, a construction industry trade association.

2:57
Saturday, September

Offsetting the imbalance are training programs, a push to encourage more high school students to enter the trades, and pure economics. Including overtime, pay for skilled tradespeople could hit $125,000 annually, said Dorsey Hager, executive secretary-treasurer of the Columbus Building Trades Council.

Or as Lt. Gov. Jon Husted, the state's economic development point person, puts it, the Intel project is so big and lucrative it will create opportunities for people who didn't see construction jobs in their future.

"When you're willing to pay people more to do something, you will find the talent," he said.

In addition to new and out-of-state workers, some will likely be pulled from the residential construction industry, thinning out an already short supply of homebuilders, said Ed Brady, CEO of the Washington, D.C.-based Home Builders Institute.

That creates a housing shortage risk that could slow the very type of economic development that Intel is sparking, said Ed Dietz of the National Association of Home Builders.

"How do you attract those business investments if you can't also provide additional housing available for the growth in the labor force?" he said.

Central Ohio is expected to reach 3 million residents by 2050, a rate that would require 11,000 to 14,000 housing units a year. That was before Intel was announced, said Jennifer Noll, the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission's associate director for community development. Meanwhile, the closest the region came to hitting that goal was in 2020 with 11,000 units.

CGC
Laborers' Local 423

Image: Paul Vernon

"We know we've got some work to do as a region," Noll said.

Shortage or not, work is underway at and near the Intel site, where parades of trucks rumbled down country roads on a recent August morning as the beeping of multiple construction vehicles sounded in the distance.

It was just another day for pipe layer Taylor Purdy, who made his regular 30-minute drive from Bangs, Ohio, to his construction job helping widen a road running alongside the Intel plant.

Purdy, 28, spends his days in trenches helping position storm and sanitary sewers and waterlines. Overtime is plentiful as deadlines approach. The Intel construction work is in its earliest phases as earthmovers reshape the 1,000 acres (400 hectares) of former farm and residential land being transformed into an industrial site.

Purdy said he likes the job security of being involved on such a big project. He's also noticed that, unlike other jobs he has worked, he does not need to explain to people what he is up to.

"They all know what I'm talking about," he said.

FORD CUTTING 3,000 WHITE-COLLAR JOBS IN BID TO LOWER COSTS

About 3,000 white-collar workers at Ford Motor Co. will lose their jobs as the company cuts costs to help make the long transition from internal combustion vehicles to those powered by batteries.

Leaders of the Dearborn, Michigan, automaker made the announcement in a companywide email, saying that 2,000 full-time salaried workers would be let go along with another 1,000 contract workers.

The cuts represent about 6% of the 31,000 full-time salaried work force in the the U.S. and Canada. Ford's 56,000 union factory workers are not affected. Some workers also will lose jobs in India.

The job losses come at a time of unprecedented change in the auto industry that for more than 100 years has made a living by selling petroleum-powered vehicles. Governments across the globe are pushing to eliminate combustion automobiles to mitigate the impact of climate change. Companies like Ford are orchestrating the wind-down of their combustion businesses over multiple years, even though they are still generating the cash to fund electric vehicle development.

Ford has said it plans for half of its global production to be electric vehicles by 2030.

Executive Chairman Bill Ford and CEO Jim Farley said in the email to employees that Ford will provide severance benefits and significant help for the workers to find new jobs. They wrote that Ford has a chance to lead in the new era of connected and electric vehicles.

"Building on this future requires changing and reshaping virtually all aspects of the way we have operated for more than a century," the email said. "It means redeploying resources and addressing our cost structure, which is uncompetitive versus traditional and new companies."

Farley and Ford wrote that the company examined each team's shifting work to decide where cuts would be made. The company determined that its cost structure wasn't competitive with General Motors, Stellantis and Tesla. Ford has said previously that it has a target of cutting $3 billion in annual internal combustion vehicle structural costs by 2026.

“We are eliminating work, as well as reorganizing and simplifying functions throughout the business,” they wrote in the email.

Farley has said repeatedly that the company’s global work force of 182,000 is too large, and it needs to trim costs and simplify processes so it can move faster as it transitions to electric vehicles.

The company already has restructured in Europe, Asia and India.

The cuts may not be over. Company spokesman T.R. Reid said Ford will continue to change with the industry and more job losses are possible. He said it’s common for companies to continually add people where they need them and trim where fewer jobs are needed. “With the fast pace of this industry, we’re going to manage the business smartly for these rapidly evolving priorities,” he said.

Ford shares, already under pressure after a $1.7 billion verdict against the company related to a vehicle fatality in Georgia, slid almost 6% and led automakers lower amid a broad sell-off in markets after the announcement.

Image: Gregory Bull

WHISTLEBLOWER ACCUSES TWITTER OF CYBERSECURITY NEGLIGENCE

A former head of security at Twitter alleged that the company misled regulators about its poor cybersecurity defenses and its negligence in attempting to root out fake accounts that spread disinformation, according to a whistleblower complaint filed with U.S. officials.

The revelation could create serious legal and financial problems for the social media platform, which is currently attempting to force Tesla CEO Elon Musk to consummate his $44 billion offer to buy the company. Several members of Congress on Tuesday called on regulators to investigate the claims.

Peiter Zatko, Twitter's security chief until he was fired early this year, filed the complaints last month with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, the Federal Trade Commission and the Department of Justice. The legal nonprofit Whistleblower Aid, which is working with Zatko, confirmed the authenticity of a redacted copy of the complaint posted online by the Washington Post.

"This was a last resort for him," said John Tye, the group's co-founder and chief disclosure officer, in an interview Tuesday. He said Zatko exhausted all attempts to get his concerns resolved inside the company before his firing in January.

Among Zatko's most serious accusations is that Twitter violated the terms of a 2011 FTC settlement by falsely claiming that it had put stronger measures in place to protect the security and privacy of its users. Zatko also accuses the company of deceptions involving its handling of "spam" or fake accounts, an allegation that is at the core of Musk's attempt to back out of the Twitter takeover.

Shares of Twitter Inc. had fallen more than 6% at one point Tuesday.

Better known by his hacker handle "Mudge," Zatko is a highly respected cybersecurity expert who first gained prominence in the 1990s and later worked in senior positions at the Pentagon's Defense Advanced Research Agency and Google.

He joined Twitter at the urging of then-CEO Jack Dorsey in late 2020, the same year the company suffered an embarrassing security breach involving hackers who broke into the Twitter accounts of world leaders, celebrities and tech moguls, including Musk, in an attempt to scam their followers out of bitcoin.

Twitter said in a prepared statement that Zatko was fired for "ineffective leadership and poor performance" and said the "allegations and opportunistic timing appear designed to capture attention and inflict harm on Twitter, its customers and its shareholders." The company called his complaint "a false narrative" that is "riddled with inconsistencies and inaccuracies and lacks important context."

Zatko's attorneys, Debra Katz and Alexis Ronickher, said Twitter's claim about his poor performance is false and that he repeatedly raised concerns about "grossly inadequate information security systems" with top executives and Twitter's board of directors. The lawyers said that in late 2021, after the board was given "whitewashed" information about those security problems, Zatko escalated his concerns, "clashed" with CEO Parag Agrawal and board member Omid Kordestani and was fired two weeks later.

The 84-page complaint describes a broken corporate culture at Twitter that lacked effective leadership and where Zatko said top executives practiced "deliberate ignorance" of pressing problems. His description of Dorsey's leadership style is particularly scathing; he described the Twitter founder as "extremely disengaged" during the last months of his tenure as CEO to the point where he would not even speak during meetings on complex issues facing the company.

Zatko said he heard from colleagues that Dorsey would remain silent for "days or weeks." Dorsey announced he was stepping down as Twitter CEO in November 2021.

The disclosure says Twitter offered no monetary incentives for improving security and platform integrity, although the company did offer $10 million bonuses last year for top executives who could generate short-term user growth.

Among Zatko's accusations of cybersecurity malpractice: Software and security updates were disabled on more than a third of employees' computers -- unduly exposing them to malware -- and it was common for people to install "whatever software they wanted on their work systems." Such lapses are typically considered cardinal sins in cybersecurity.

Whistleblower Aid said it is legally precluded from sharing Zatko's statement. The same group worked with former Facebook employee Frances Haugen, who testified to Congress last year after leaking internal documents and accusing the social media giant of choosing profit over safety.

"I wouldn't say he's happy about having to become a whistleblower, but he's resolute in his decision," Tye said. "And committed to getting to the bottom of this."

A spokesperson for the U.S. Senate's intelligence committee, Rachel Cohen, said the committee has received Zatko's complaint and is working to set up a meeting "to discuss the allegations in further detail. We take this matter seriously."

Sen. Dick Durbin, an Illinois Democrat, said in a prepared statement that if the claims are accurate, "they may show dangerous data privacy and security risks for Twitter users around the world."

Among the most alarming complaints is Zatko's allegation that Twitter knowingly allowed the Indian government to place its agents on the company payroll where they had "direct unsupervised access to the company's systems and user data."

A 2011 FTC complaint noted that Twitter's systems were full of highly sensitive data that could allow a hostile government to find precise location data for specific users and target them for violence or arrest. Earlier this month, a former Twitter employee was found guilty after a trial in California of passing along sensitive Twitter user data to royal family members in Saudi Arabia in exchange for bribes.

The complaint said Twitter was also heavily reliant on funding by Chinese entities and that there were concerns within Twitter that the company was providing information to those entities that would enable them to learn the identify and sensitive information of Chinese users who secretly use Twitter, which is officially banned in China.

Zatko also describes willful ignorance by Twitter executives on counting the millions of accounts that are automated "spam bots" or otherwise have no value to advertisers because there is no person behind them. Zatko cited a "damning" 2021 outside report that found Twitter's tools for tackling bots were neither sufficiently automated or sophisticated and instead relied on humans "not adequately staffed or resourced, to address the misinformation and disinformation problem."

Alex Spiro, an attorney representing Musk in his effort to back out of his Twitter acquisition deal, said lawyers have issued a subpoena for Zatko. "We found his exit and that of other key employees curious in light of what we have been finding," Spiro wrote in an email. Spiro said Zatko and Musk have not been in contact at any time this year.

Tye said "he's never met Elon Musk. Doesn't know Elon Musk. They know people in common." Asked if mutual friends could have shared information about Twitter's bot problems with Musk, Tye said Zatko "has not communicated with any other party about his disclosures" since filing the complaints in July.

Image: Jim Wilson

Image: Richard Drew

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5 TAKEAWAYS FROM TWITTER WHISTLEBLOWER PEITER ZATKO

Startling new revelations from Twitter's former head of security, Peiter Zatko, have raised serious new questions about the security of the platform's service, its ability to identify and remove fake accounts, and the truthfulness of its statements to users, shareholders and federal regulators.

Zatko — better known by his hacker handle "Mudge" — is a respected cybersecurity expert who first gained prominence in the 1990s and later worked in senior positions at the Pentagon's Defense Advanced Research Agency and Google. Twitter fired him from the security job early this year for what the company called "ineffective leadership and poor performance." Zatko's attorneys say that claim is false.

In a whistleblower complaint made public this week, Zatko documented his uphill 14-month effort to bolster Twitter security, boost the reliability of its service, repel intrusions by agents of foreign governments and both measure and take action against fake "bot" accounts that spammed the platform. In a statement, Twitter called Zatko's description of events "a false narrative."

Here are five takeaways from that whistleblower complaint.

TWITTER'S SECURITY AND PRIVACY SYSTEMS WERE GROSSLY INADEQUATE

In 2011, Twitter settled a Federal Trade Commission investigation into its privacy practices by agreeing to put stronger data security protections in place. Zatko's complaint charges that Twitter's problems grew worse over time instead.

For instance, the complaint states, Twitter's internal systems allowed far too many employees access to personal user data they didn't need for their jobs — a situation ripe for abuse. For years, Twitter also continued to mine user data such as phone numbers and email addresses — intended only for security purposes — for ad targeting and marketing campaigns, according to the complaint.

TWITTER'S ENTIRE SERVICE COULD HAVE COLLAPSED IRREPARABLY UNDER STRESS

One of the most striking revelations in Zatko's complaint is the claim that Twitter's internal data systems were so ramshackle — and the company's contingency plans so insufficient — that any widespread crash or unplanned shutdown could have tanked the entire platform.

The concern was that a "cascading" data-center failure could quickly spread across Twitter's fragile information systems. As the complaint put it: "That meant that if all the centers went offline simultaneously, even briefly, Twitter was unsure if they could bring the service back up. Downtime estimates ranged from weeks of round-the-clock work, to permanent irreparable failure."

TWITTER MISLED REGULATORS, INVESTORS AND MUSK ABOUT FAKE "SPAM" BOTS

In essence, Zatko's complaint states that Tesla CEO Elon Musk — whose $44 billion bid to acquire Twitter is headed for October trial in a Delaware court — is correct when he charges that Twitter executives have little incentive to accurately measure the prevalence of fake accounts on the system.

The complaint charges that the company's executive leadership practiced "deliberate ignorance" on the subject of these so-called spam bots. "Senior management had no appetite to properly measure the prevalence of bot accounts," the complaint states, adding that executives were concerned that accurate bot measurements would harm Twitter's "image and valuation."

ON JAN. 6, 2021, TWITTER COULD HAVE BEEN AT THE MERCY OF DISGRUNTLED EMPLOYEES

Zatko's complaint states that as a mob assembled in front of the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, eventually storming the building, he began to worry that employees sympathetic to the rioters might try to sabotage Twitter. That concern spiked when he learned it was "impossible" to protect the platform's core systems from a hypothetical rogue or disgruntled engineer aiming to wreak havoc.

"There were no logs, nobody knew where data lived or whether it was critical, and all engineers had some form of critical access" to Twitter's core functions, the complaint states.

A PLAYGROUND FOR FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS

The Zatko complaint also highlights Twitter's difficulty in identifying — much less resisting — the presence of foreign agents on its service. In one instance, the complaint alleges, the Indian government required Twitter to hire specific individuals alleged to be spies, and who would have had significant access to sensitive data thanks to Twitter's own lax security controls. The complaint also alleges a murkier situation involving taking money from unidentified "Chinese entities" that then could access data that might endanger Twitter users in China.

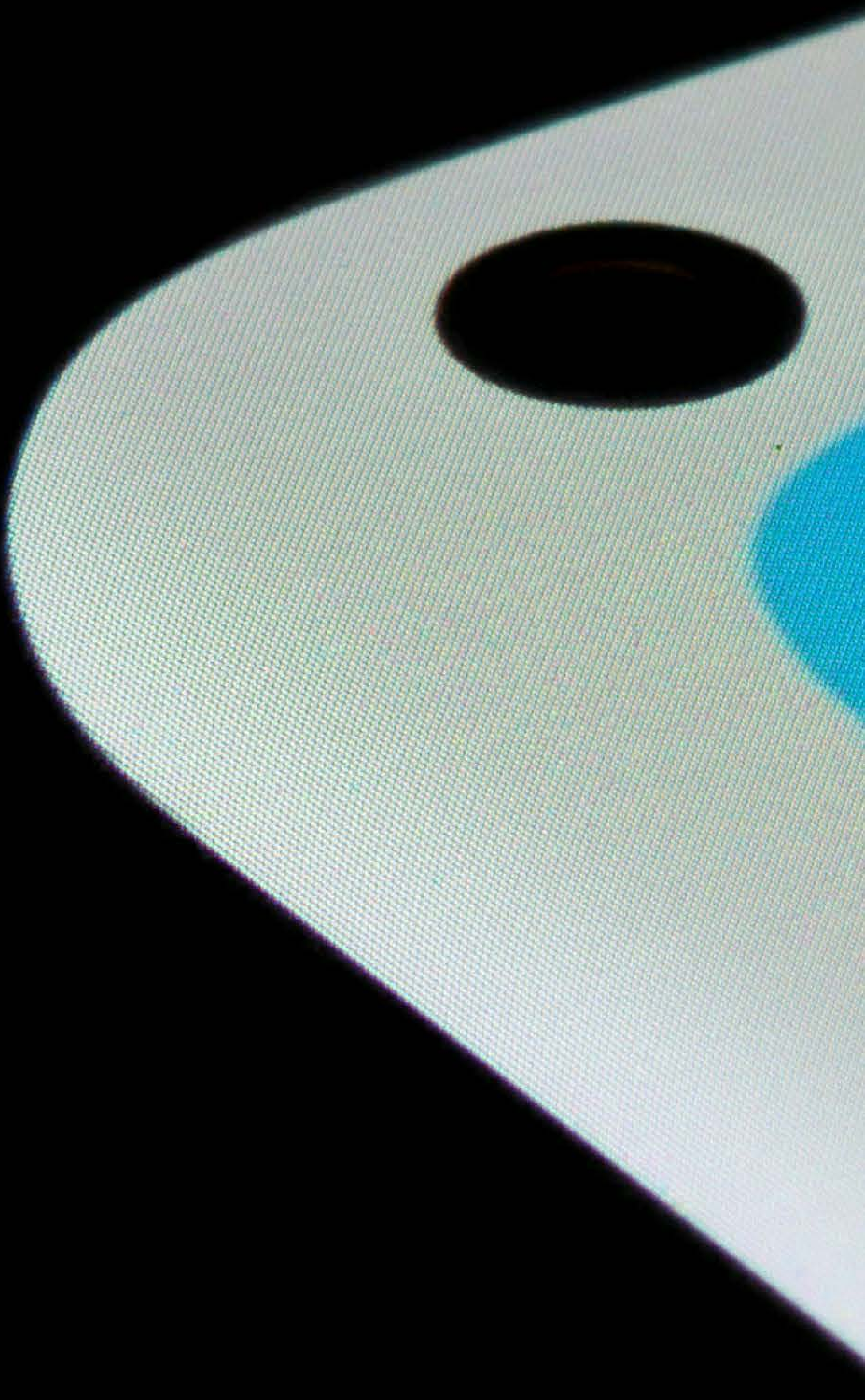

Image: Dado Ruvic

PELOTON

PELOTON TO SELL ITS BIKES ON AMAZON IN BID TO REVERSE SLUMP

Peloton's high-end exercise bikes and other gear will now be able to be bought on Amazon in the U.S., a partnership aimed at boosting the fitness company's sales that have languished since the easing of pandemic lockdowns.

"We want to meet consumers where they are, and they are shopping on Amazon," Kevin Cornils, Peloton's chief commercial officer, said in a statement.

The collaboration is Peloton's first with another retailer. Before, its products were sold only through its website, physical showrooms and other channels.

And it comes after the company earlier this month said it was shedding jobs, shifting its delivery work to third-party vendors and significantly reducing the number of stores it has in North America.

The news of the Amazon deal sent shares of New York-based Peloton Interactive Inc. soaring 20% after the announcement. They are still down about 88% in the last 12 months.

Products available at the launch on Amazon will include Peloton's original bike — listed at $1,445 — its strength-training "Guide" device, as well as its workout mat, dumbbells and glass water bottle.

The company best known for its interactive stationary bikes saw its sales boom during the pandemic, but it has struggled to maintain high demand as COVID-19 vaccines became more widely available and homebound consumers started to go back to the gym.

Amid those challenges, it sought to cut costs and reduce its operating footprint while ramping up prices on some of its popular products. Last month, it said it would outsource manufacturing for its stationary bikes and treadmills.

The company says bike delivery will be available to most of the U.S. As part of the partnership, customers can get an expert to assemble their bikes, the company said.

ELOTON

AS AMAZON GROWS, SO DOES ITS EYE ON CONSUMERS

on

amazon
Visitor & Associates ←
All Trucks ↑
546 GULF AVENUE

From what you buy online, to how you remember tasks, to when you monitor your doorstep, Amazon is seemingly everywhere.

And it appears the company doesn't want to halt its reach anytime soon. In recent weeks, Amazon has said it will spend billions of dollars in two gigantic acquisitions that, if approved, will broaden its ever growing presence in the lives of consumers.

This time, the company is targeting two areas: health care, through its $3.9 billion buyout of the primary care company One Medical, and the "smart home," where it plans to expand its already mighty presence through a $1.7 billion merger with iRobot, the maker of the popular robotic Roomba vacuum.

Perhaps unsurprisingly for a company known for its vast collection of consumer information, both mergers have heightened enduring privacy concerns about how Amazon gathers data and what it does with it. The latest line of Roombas, for example, employ sensors that map and remember a home's floor plan.

"It's acquiring this vast set of data that Roomba collects about people's homes," said Ron Knox, an Amazon critic who works for the anti-monopoly group Institute for Local Self-Reliance. "Its obvious intent, through all the other products that it sells to consumers, is to be in your home. (And) along with the privacy issues come the antitrust issues, because it's buying market share."

Amazon's reach goes well beyond that. Some estimates show the retail giant controls roughly 38% of the U.S. e-commerce market, allowing it to gather granular data about the shopping preferences of millions of Americans and more worldwide. Meanwhile, its Echo devices, which house the voice assistant Alexa, have dominated the U.S. smart speaker market, accounting for roughly 70% of sales, according to estimates by Consumer Intelligence Research Partners.

Ring, which Amazon purchased in 2018 for $1 billion, monitors doorsteps and helps police track down crime — even when users might not be aware. And at select Amazon stores and Whole Foods, the company is testing a palm-scanning technology that allows customers to pay for items by storing biometric data in the cloud, sparking concerns about risks of a data breach, which Amazon has attempted to assuage.

"We treat your palm signature just like other highly sensitive personal data and keep it safe using best-in-class technical and physical security controls," the company said on a website that provides information about the technology.

Even consumers who actively avoid Amazon are still likely to have little say about how their employers power their computer networks, which Amazon — along with Google — has long dominated through its cloud-computing service AWS.

"It's hard to think of another organization that has as many touch points as Amazon does to an individual," said Ian Greenblatt, who heads up tech research at the consumer research and data analytics firm J.D. Power. "It's almost overwhelming, and it's hard to put a finger on it."

And Amazon — like any company — aims to grow. In the past few years, the company has purchased the Wi-Fi startup Eero and partnered with the construction company Lennar to offer

amazon

tech-powered houses. With iRobot, it would gain one more building block for the ultimate smart home — and, of course, more data.

Customers can opt out of having iRobot devices store a layout of their homes, according to the vacuum maker. But data privacy advocates worry the merger is another way Amazon could suck up information to integrate into its other devices or use to target consumers with ads.

In a statement, Amazon spokesperson Lisa Levandowski denied that's what the company wants to do.

"We do not use home maps for targeted advertising and have no plans to do so," Levandowski said.

Whether that will relieve concerns is another matter, especially in light of research about Amazon's other devices. Earlier this year, a group of university researchers released a report that found voice data from Amazon's Echo devices are used to target ads to consumers — something the company had denied in the past.

Umar Iqbal, a postdoc at the University of Washington who led the research, said he and his colleagues found Echo devices running third-party Skills, which are like apps for Alexa, that communicate with advertisers.

Levandowski said consumers can opt out of receiving "interest-based" ads by adjusting their preferences on Amazon's advertising preferences page. She also said Amazon doesn't share Alexa requests with advertising networks.

Skills that collect personal information are required to post their privacy policies on a detail page in Amazon's store, according to the company. Researchers, however, found only 2% of Skills are clear about their data collection practices, and the vast majority don't mention Alexa or Amazon at all.

For companies like Amazon, data collection is for more than just data's sake, noted Kristen Martin, a professor of technology ethics at the University of Notre Dame.

"You can almost see them just trying to paint a broader picture of an individual," Martin said. "It's about the inferences that they're able to draw about you specifically, and then you compared to other people."

Amazon's One Medical deal, for instance, has sparked questions about how the company would handle personal health data that would fall into its lap.

Should the deal close, Levandowski said customers' health information will be handled separately from all other Amazon businesses. She also added Amazon wouldn't share personal health information outside of One Medical for "advertising or marketing purposes of other Amazon products and services without clear permission from the customer."

But Lucia Savage, a chief privacy officer at the chronic care provider Omada Health, said that doesn't mean One Medical wouldn't be able to get data from other arms of Amazon's business that could help it better profile its patients. The information just has to flow one way, she said.

To be sure, privacy concerns are not limited to Amazon. In the aftermath of Roe v Wade being overturned, for instance, Google said it would automatically get rid of information about users

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WHOLE FOODS

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amazon
amazon
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who visit abortion clinics amid pressure from Democratic lawmakers. Meanwhile, Meta, which owns Facebook, settled a class action lawsuit in February over its use of "cookies" about a decade ago that tracked users after they logged off Facebook.

But unlike Meta and Google, whose focus is mainly on selling ads, Amazon might benefit more from collecting data because its primary goal is to sell products, said Alex Harman, director of competition policy at the anti-monopoly group Economic Security Project.

"For them, data is all about getting you to buy more and be locked into their stuff," Harman said.

NASA TESTS NEW MOON ROCKET, 50 YEARS AFTER APOLLO

Years late and billions over budget, NASA's new moon rocket makes its debut next week in a high-stakes test flight before astronauts get on top.

The 322-foot (98-meter) rocket will attempt to send an empty crew capsule into a far-flung lunar orbit, 50 years after NASA's famed Apollo moonshots.

If all goes well, astronauts could strap in as soon as 2024 for a lap around the moon, with NASA aiming to land two people on the lunar surface by the end of 2025.

Liftoff is set for Monday morning from NASA's Kennedy Space Center.

The six-week test flight is risky and could be cut short if something fails, NASA officials warn.

A R
NASA

“We’re going to stress it and test it. We’re going make it do things that we would never do with a crew on it in order to try to make it as safe as possible,” NASA Administrator Bill Nelson told.

The retired founder of George Washington University’s space policy institute said a lot is riding on this trial run. Spiraling costs and long gaps between missions will make for a tough comeback if things go south, he noted.

“It is supposed to be the first step in a sustained program of human exploration of the moon, Mars, and beyond,” said John Logsdon. “Will the United States have the will to push forward in the face of a major malfunction?”

The price tag for this single mission: more than $4 billion. Add everything up since the program’s inception a decade ago until a 2025 lunar landing, and there’s even more sticker shock: $93 billion.

Here’s a rundown of the first flight of the Artemis program, named after Apollo’s mythological twin sister.

ROCKET POWER

The new rocket is shorter and slimmer than the Saturn V rockets that hurled 24 Apollo astronauts to the moon a half-century ago. But it’s mightier, packing 8.8 million pounds (4 million kilograms) of thrust. It’s called the Space Launch System rocket, SLS for short, but a less clunky name is under discussion, according to Nelson. Unlike the streamlined Saturn V, the new rocket has a pair of strap-on boosters refashioned from NASA’s space shuttles. The boosters will peel away after two minutes, just like the shuttle boosters did, but won’t be fished from the Atlantic for reuse. The core stage will keep firing before separating and crashing into the Pacific in pieces. Two hours after liftoff, an upper stage will send the capsule, Orion, racing toward the moon.

MOONSHIP

NASA's high-tech, automated Orion capsule is named after the constellation, among the night sky's brightest. At 11 feet (3 meters) tall, it's roomier than Apollo's capsule, seating four astronauts instead of three. For this test flight, a full-size dummy in an orange flight suit will occupy the commander's seat, rigged with vibration and acceleration sensors. Two other mannequins made of material simulating human tissue — heads and female torsos, but no limbs — will measure cosmic radiation, one of the biggest risks of spaceflight. One torso is testing a protective vest from Israel. Unlike the rocket, Orion has launched before, making two laps around Earth in 2014. This time, the European Space Agency's service module will be attached for propulsion and solar power via four wings.

FLIGHT PLAN

Orion's flight is supposed to last six weeks from its Florida liftoff to Pacific splashdown, twice as long as astronaut trips in order to tax the systems. It will take nearly a week to reach the moon, 240,000 miles (386,000 kilometers) away. After whipping closely around the moon, the capsule will enter a distant orbit with a far point of 38,000 miles (61,000 kilometers). That will put Orion 280,000 miles (450,000 kilometers) from Earth, farther than Apollo. The big test comes at mission's end, as Orion hits the atmosphere

at 25,000 mph (40,000 kph) on its way to a splashdown in the Pacific. The heat shield uses the same material as the Apollo capsules to withstand reentry temperatures of 5,000 degrees Fahrenheit (2,750 degrees Celsius). But the advanced design anticipates the faster, hotter returns by future Mars crews.

HITCHHIKERS

Besides three test dummies, the flight has a slew of stowaways for deep space research. Ten shoebox-size satellites will pop off once Orion is hurtling toward the moon. The problem is these so-called CubeSats were installed in the rocket a year ago, and the batteries for half of them couldn't be recharged as the launch kept getting delayed. NASA expects some to fail, given the low-cost, high-risk nature of these mini satellites. The radiation-measuring CubeSats should be OK. Also in the clear: a solar sail demo targeting an asteroid. In a back-to-the-future salute, Orion will carry a few slivers of moon rocks collected by Apollo 11's Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin in 1969, and a bolt from one of their rocket engines, salvaged from the sea a decade ago. Aldrin isn't attending the launch, according to NASA, but three of his former colleagues will be there: Apollo 7's Walter Cunningham, Apollo 10's Tom Stafford and Apollo 17's Harrison Schmitt, the next-to-last man to walk on the moon.

APOLLO VS. ARTEMIS

More than 50 years later, Apollo still stands as NASA's greatest achievement. Using 1960s technology, NASA took just eight years to go from launching its first astronaut, Alan Shepard, and landing Armstrong and Aldrin on the moon. By contrast, Artemis already has dragged on for more than a decade, despite building on the short-lived moon exploration program Constellation. Twelve Apollo astronauts walked on the moon from 1969 through 1972, staying no longer than three days at a time. For Artemis, NASA will be drawing from a diverse astronaut pool currently numbering 42 and is extending the time crews will spend on the moon to at least a week. The goal is to create a long-term lunar presence that will grease the skids for sending people to Mars. NASA's Nelson, promises to announce the first Artemis moon crews once Orion is back on Earth.

WHAT'S NEXT

There's a lot more to be done before astronauts step on the moon again. A second test flight will send four astronauts around the moon and back, perhaps as early as 2024. A year or so later, NASA aims to send another four up, with two of them touching down at the lunar south pole. Orion doesn't come with its own lunar lander like the Apollo spacecraft did, so NASA has hired Elon Musk's SpaceX to provide its Starship spacecraft for the first Artemis moon landing. Two other private companies are developing moonwalking suits. The sci-fi-looking Starship would link up with Orion at the moon and take a pair of astronauts to the surface and back to the capsule for the ride home. So far, Starship has only soared six miles (10 kilometers). Musk wants to launch Starship around Earth on SpaceX's Super Heavy Booster before attempting a moon landing without a crew. One hitch: Starship will need a fill-up at an Earth-orbiting fuel depot, before heading to the moon.

NASA

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE 2022 EMMYS

emmys®

NOMINATIONS

Are you ready for some football? Fine, but the return of the NFL is why the 2022 Emmy Awards have been drop-kicked from their usual Sunday berth to Monday.

Television's top awards rotate among the top four networks, and this year's broadcast home, NBC, has reserved the second Sunday night in September for Tampa Bay vs. Dallas. After the Emmys slogged through two years of pandemic-restricted ceremonies, a day's delay seems a minor annoyance.

The industry is expected to put on its Monday best, swan down the red carpet and celebrate itself and the wealth of shows across streaming services, cable and, to a degree that pales compared to years' past, old-school network fare.

But what's a Hollywood awards show without a TV audience? A low-rated disappointment, and that's where you come in. If you decide to do your bit and tune in, here's a roadmap to everything you need to know about the 2022 Emmys.

WHEN ARE THE 2022 EMMMYS?

The 74th Primetime Emmy Awards are set for Monday, Sept. 12, at the Microsoft Theatre in Los Angeles. The roughly three-hour ceremony will begin at 8 p.m. EDT and air live on NBC and, for free, on the streaming service Peacock.

But the Emmys, with 118 total awards, aren't a one-day affair. Winners in 25 key categories including best drama and comedy series will be announced during the broadcast ceremony, with the rest divvied up between the Sept. 3 and 4 creative arts awards. An edited version of the weekend ceremonies, with categories including sound editing and cinematography, will air at 8 p.m. EDT Sept. 10 on FXX.

WHO IS HOSTING THE EMMYS CEREMONY?

The honor usually goes to a comedian with a link to the network airing the event, and NBC stayed the course: It chose "Saturday Night Live" veteran Kenan Thompson, a first-time Emmy host who's been preceded in the emcee job by a number of "SNL" stars. The ceremony has tried going without a host, most recently in 2019, but the results weren't always pretty. Or entertaining.

WHICH SHOWS ARE NOMINATED FOR THE TOP AWARDS AT THE EMMYS?

Some previous winners are vying again for best series honors, including "Ted Lasso," a freshman when it won 2021's best comedy series, and "Succession," which claimed the 2020 best drama award. (The series didn't air during the eligibility window for 2021, when "The Crown" won.)

There are also formidable newcomers, including the dystopian drama "Squid Game" and comedy crime romp "Only Murders in the Building."

Among the nominated actors, those hoping to be repeat victors include Jason Sudeikis of "Ted Lasso," Jean Smart of "Hacks" and Zendaya of "Euphoria." Check out the full list of Emmy nominees.

WHAT WERE THE MOST SURPISING EMMY NODS?

So many, where to begin? The farewell season of "This Is Us" got a single nomination, for original music and lyrics, after reaping Emmys for several

EMMYS

cast members in years past. It was a similar case for the last year of "black-ish," which ended its groundbreaking run with just two creative arts nominations. On the flip side, it was far from a slam dunk that Dave Chappelle's "The Closer," with its controversial anti-transgender comments, would earn a best variety special nomination. It did.

WHO DECIDES THE EMMY WINNERS?

The more than 17,000 voting members of the TV academy are eligible to decide nominees and winners in 14 categories, including drama, comedy and limited series. The acting awards, including lead, supporting and guest actors, are determined by peer groups, as are directing, writing and other individual areas of achievement. The number of nominees in most categories generally is tied to the number of submissions, with exceptions including best comedy and dramas series: They get eight nominees each.

‘BEAST,’ WITH IDRIS ELBA, HAS B-MOVIE BITE

Sharks, grizzlies, giant snakes and rampaging apes have traditionally been the go-to choices for animal-kingdom antagonists in survival thrillers. Lions not so much. Maybe the king of the jungle has always been too regal, too majestic — too heroic — to be lowered to the status of mere summer-movie marauder.

But the circle of life also pertains to movies, and it was probably inevitable that the lion’s time would come. That’s, at least, the nature of “Beast,” a surprisingly agile and nifty B-movie graced by Idris Elba’s formidable presence, fluid camerawork and tolerable levels of implausibility.

R FAMILY

Beast | Official Trailer

It's a movie well engineered as a late-summer diversion — a big cat movie for the dog days of August — that Icelandic director Baltasar Kormákur ("Adrift," "Everest") insures stays well within the paths of man-against-nature films before it. But while the lion is CGI, the South African location is genuine, and Kormákur and cinematographer Philippe Rousselot's long, well-choreographed takes give "Beast" an immersive quality well beyond the genre's usual slapdash cutting.

But how do you make a lion a diabolical hunter? "Beast," written by Ryan Engle, opens with poachers mowing down a pride of lions. But one — a big one — escapes, and has a preternatural taste for avenging the killings and protecting its territory. The lion's ferocity is easy to empathize with, ever to root for. Having had his family taken from him, he's like the Liam Neeson of lions.

This is what Nate Samuels (Elba) and his two daughters, Meredith (Iyana Halley) and Norah (Leah Jeffries), walk into. They've just arrived in South Africa, a trip that Nate hopes will be a healing one for the family. They're still reeling from the death of Nate's wife from cancer, a loss that Mere and Norah partly blame on Nate, a doctor. The pair had also separated a year before her death, adding to the family friction.

But what's better at ailing abandonment issues than a man-hunting lion? After reuniting with an old friend, Martin (Sharlto Copley), a vehemently anti-poacher wildlife biologist, the four set out in a jeep to explore the savanna. It doesn't take long before they stumble across the lion's victims and find themselves fending off his attacks from the vehicle. When Martin radios that the lion is staring

Beast - Striking Back Featurette

right at him, one of the daughters gamely asks, "Is that a little, um, unnatural?"

There's the backdrop of animal treatment, but "Beast" is mostly unburdened by larger meaning. For most of its brisk 93-minute running time, the Samuels tussle with the animal in a game of (big) cat and mouse. The shark in "Jaws" put an entire community under the microscope, but the scope of "Beast" is narrowly fixed on Nate and his girls. There isn't any beast within here, just a beast.

But with lively supporting performances from Halley and Jeffries and a commanding one from Elba, they make a realistic, often bickering family. Elba's commitment to the film gives it more psychological weight than it might deserve. Nothing will surprise you in how "Beasts" unfolds except for how engrossing it manages to be.

"Beast," a Universal Pictures release, is rated R by the Motion Picture Association of America for violent content, bloody images and some language. Running time: 93 minutes. Three stars out of four.

Beast | Idris on the Set

NEW ELECTRIC VEHICLE TAX CREDITS RAISE TALK OF TRADE WAR

TESLA

A new tax credit for U.S. buyers of qualifying electric vehicles made in North America has ignited the specter of a trade war as a domestic imperative of the Biden administration and Democrats collides with the complex realities of globalization.

Democrats included the credit in the expansive climate and health care policy law passed earlier this month as a way to incentivize domestic battery and electric vehicle production. But manufacturers in Europe and South Korea, which sell millions of vehicles in the U.S., have threatened to lodge legal complaints with the World Trade Organization.

Adam Hodge, a spokesman for the U.S. Trade Representative, said the intent of the tax credit is to boost "U.S. EV manufacturing, infrastructure, and innovation that will help us meet our clean energy goals, reduce costs, and create jobs" and "to reduce our dependence on China" for critical materials.

How the Biden administration handles the allegations brought by foreign governments and manufacturers will demonstrate whether the president's international trade position will mirror the Trump administration's go-it-alone approach, leaving the World Trade Organization's dispute resolution process in disarray.

The law includes a tax credit of up to $7,500 that could be used to defray the cost of purchasing an electric vehicle. But to qualify for the full credit, the electric vehicle must contain a battery built in North America with 40% of the metals mined or recycled on the continent. And those rules become more strict over time, such that only a few American manufacturers could produce vehicles that qualify for the credits.

That has caused consternation among U.S. carmakers, who say they have ramped up efforts to bolster their supply chains in order to qualify for the credit.

"We are working overtime to localize our supply chains and ramp up production," said Chris Smith, chief government affairs officer at Ford in a statement last week.

It also has roiled the framework for dealing with the layered matters of international trade.

Earlier this month, when asked about the tax credit, European Commission spokeswoman Miriam Garcia Ferrer said, "we think that it's discriminatory, that it's discriminating against foreign producers in relation to U.S. producers," calling the credits a "new, potential, trans-Atlantic trade barrier."

"Of course this would mean that it would be incompatible with the WTO," she said.

Hildegard Mueller, the head of Germany's auto lobby group VDA, which represents major manufacturers such as Volkswagen and smaller suppliers, also criticized the measures and has asked the EU to intervene.

"We are critical of the fact that the subsidy is tied to conditions which relate to local value creation and therefore disadvantage products from third countries," Mueller said. "The European Commission is called upon to clearly advocate for non-discriminatory support here."

However, the potential for a World Trade Organization complaint highlights the void left in part by the Trump administration, which blew

up the WTO's appeals body when it blocked the approval of new judges to serve on the dispute resolution panel. The panel is supposed to have seven judges. But their ranks have dwindled because the United States — under Presidents George W. Bush, Barack Obama and Trump — has blocked new appointments to protest the way the WTO does business.

The WTO acts as a high court for international trade issues and has 164 member-countries.

Daniel Pruzin, a spokesman for the organization, said it has a policy of "not commenting on matters which are or may be the subject of WTO dispute proceedings," adding that the WTO has yet to receive communication from any members with an intent to initiate dispute proceedings against the EV tax credit.

Simon Lester, current president of WorldTradeLaw.net, which provides summary and analysis of all WTO reports and arbitrations, said "there are pretty strong claims that various aspects of the statue violate a number of WTO obligations."

"There are possible defenses the U.S. could raise, but the defenses are somewhat weak," he said.

Presidents of both parties in the U.S. have expressed deep skepticism of WTO, but Biden administration officials have tried to bolster trade relationships overseas.

One measure of how far the administration will go is whether it will approve new judges. A representative from the White House did not comment on whether the administration intends to approve new judges for the administrative body.

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Trade experts are not confident there will be a functioning WTO body in the near future.

"The U.S. has an interest in this situation not to have a ruling against them," Lester said.

Douglas Holtz-Eakin, president of the conservative-leaning American Action Forum said "there is no question" that provisions in the tax credit plan are discriminatory to foreign manufacturers. Without a resolution to the EV tax credit complaints, he said, "this will lead to some sort of retaliation on large U.S. corporations that do business in Europe."

He added, "This isn't even a close call, which means the U.S. doesn't plan to step up and fix the appeals process anytime soon. On a bipartisan basis, leaders have become disenchanted with the WTO because of its inability to put pressure on China."

Padideh Ala'i, an American University law professor who specializes in trade, said because the WTO has been unable to rein in China for its trade violations, the adjudicative organization has been seen as ineffective.

"But international rulemaking is important and in the absence of that what are we left with — a nonfunctioning appeals body," world trade relationships will now be left to bilateral agreements and negotiations between powerful parties and smaller countries.

"We entered into these arrangements so that we can safeguard peace, so now we are going to find out what the alternatives are without a WTO appellate body."

BUDGETING CAN BE A CHALLENGE. HERE ARE 5 TIPS TO GET STARTED

Budgeting is key to managing your finances, whether you're trying to pay off debt, start a rainy day fund or deal with the consequences of inflation.

Creating a budget is much like trying to eat better or exercise more — everyone tells you it's good for you, but it's hard to get into the habit, said Colleen McCreary, consumer financial advocate at Credit Karma.

"A lot of people think it's over-complicated and a hard thing to do," McCreary said. "Much like going to the gym, the hardest part is showing up, so you just have to decide that you're going to try it out."

Even with prices high due to inflation, Elena Pelayo, educator at How Money Works, a financial literacy organization, said there are small steps you can take to manage your money. These include looking at how many online subscriptions you pay for or how often you eat in restaurants and cutting back where you can.

Here are five important steps when you're ready to create a budget:

1. WRITE IT DOWN

Writing down all of your expenses is crucial, said Pelayo. She suggests recording every penny that you spend rather than trying to approximate, which can lead to errors.

Pelayo recommends using whatever method fits you best, whether that's writing it down on paper, creating an Excel spreadsheet or using a website.

Next, she recommends categorizing where your income should be spent. Always start off with covering your basic needs.

A well-known budgeting system is the 50/30/20 rule, where 50% of your income is allocated for necessities like food and rent, 30% for things you want, and 20% for savings and debt repayment.

Wiltrice Rogers of Allen Park, Michigan, has used this system for more than 30 years.

"It helped me to see how beneficial it is, and that we have more discretionary funds when I follow this method," said Rogers, an intake coordinator for a nonprofit organization.

Websites such as NerdWallet or Money Fit offer 50/30/20 calculators to help.

This method works for many people, but it might not be right for you if necessities eat up more than 50 percent, in which case you'll need to allocate less for savings or things you want to do or buy.

2. BUDGET FORMAT

Writing down your after-tax salary and then adding your expenses in a notebook or a blank spreadsheet might be enough to make a plan. But if you need help visualizing what's coming in and going out, there are resources available.

"There are lots of online templates that'll help you look at spending categories and expense categories for personal finance. And they're really helpful," Pelayo said.

The Federal Trade Commission offers a budget template in a PDF format that can be printed, and Microsoft offers Excel templates for special occasions such as saving for a wedding or home construction. If you prefer apps, Mint, PocketGuard, and EveryDollar are among Bankrate's top five budgeting apps.

3. MAKE A REALISTIC PLAN

If 50/30/20 isn't realistic for you, there are still ways to save and tackle debt. Start setting aside small quantities of money every month or set small goals, such as choosing a restaurant where you won't spend more than $40, McCreary said.

"Small steps lead to progress," she said. "It's really about progress, not perfection."

McCreary recommends starting with one goal each week, whether that's saving a certain amount or reducing the amount you spend on non-necessities.

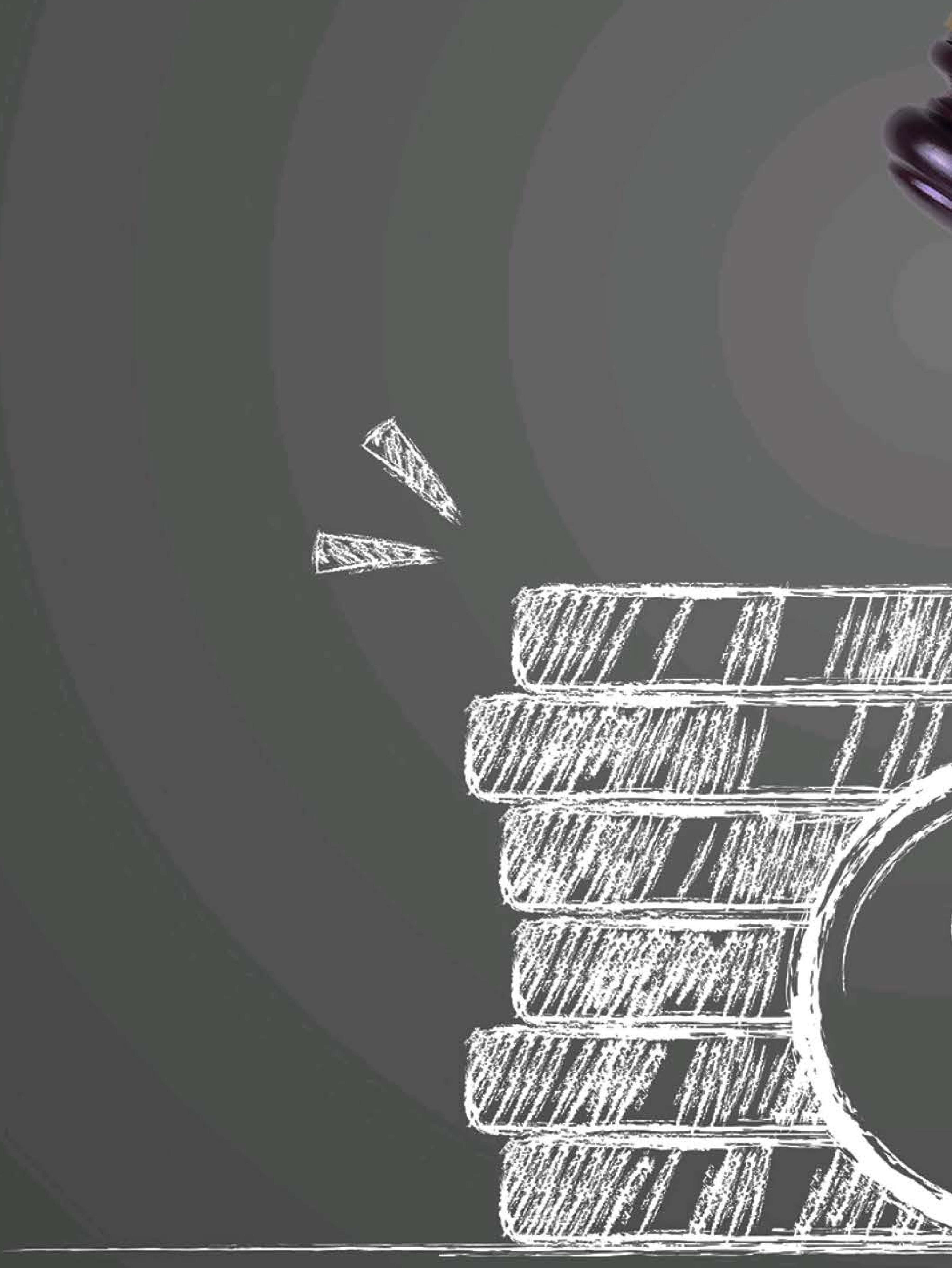
"Don't overcomplicate it, don't make it too hard for yourself," she said.

Rogers, for example, usually tries to save as much money as possible when buying groceries.

"I get the sales papers and mark what we need and if it's on sale. I try to do a triangle of the stores to save time and gas" she said. She also buys in bulk, sticks to her grocery list, and goes shopping by herself to avoid her son and husband convincing her to buy extra items.

Websites such as Flipp, which shows digital flyers from major retailers around you, and Groupon, where you can find coupons for products and services, can make it easier to save money. But keep in mind that this only works when you use coupons for items that you really need or were planning to buy anyway.

If your income just covers your necessities, reducing credit card debt can be challenging. Pelayo recommends that even if you live paycheck to paycheck, you might want to add at least $10 above the minimum payment of your credit card with the highest interest rate. And if you can afford



it, she recommends paying 10% more than the minimum payment per month.

4. MAKE IT A HABIT

To achieve your financial goals through a budget, you have to change your mindset, Pelayo said.

"You have to look deep inside yourself and say, am I willing to change my habits?" she said.

Once you are mentally ready, you can start setting goals.

— Set a time goal

Building new habits can be hard, and it's even more daunting to think about having to maintain them for the rest of your life.

McCreary recommends that your first goal can be two weeks of keeping a budget. After achieving that, you can set a longer timeline, such as 30 days or six months, until it is embedded in your routine.

— Gamify your budget

If you're still struggling, McCreary recommends that you gamify your budget and turn it into a challenge.

"Maybe there's an outcome involved. Like 'Hey, if we save enough money, we can get a new TV or go on vacation,'" she said.

Examples of gamification include giving yourself a small reward after a certain amount of time or money that you have saved.

Apps such as Mint, which rewards the number of times you check your budget, and Acorns, which allows users to invest with their spare change, can help. Yotta and Save to Win allow users to create saving bank accounts that rewards them for the amount that they save.

For accountant Tiffona Stewart, gamifying her savings meant using the envelope system, where you put cash in envelopes for specific expenses.

"This is tailored to your life and what you want to save for, so that's what I like about it," Stewart said.

Stewart also started a business selling envelopes and budget binders on Etsy as a way to encourage and promote financial literacy. She sells "one month challenge" packages meant to help save $1,000 in cash.

"You play those games and you make these things your own. You're trying something new, there's nothing wrong and right, you might get it wrong one month and then get better the next one," she said.

5. INVOLVE YOUR FAMILY OR FRIENDS

As with any lifestyle change, having people around you to support your decisions and encourage healthy habits is crucial, McCreary said. That could include talking with your significant other about your finances, telling your friends that you will start budgeting, or explaining to your children how the family is now spending money.

Rogers' 11-year-old son now knows that if there is not a coupon for the item, they don't get it.

In Stewart's case, using cash when going out with friends helped. If you only take $100 out with you to the bar and don't bring your credit card, and you want to pay for another round but you only have $20 left, you simply can't spend any more, she said.

"You need everybody who's involved in those decisions, to commit with you to be supportive of it," McCreary said.

DATA ON CALIFORNIA PRISONS' VISITORS, STAFF, INMATES EXPOSED

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California corrections officials said that there has been a potential exposure of medical information for employees and visitors who were tested for the coronavirus, although they have not found any improper use despite the data breach.

The data was for people who were tested for COVID-19 in the department between June 2020 and last January.

The testing data did not include inmates, but the resulting investigation uncovered the potential release of mental health and financial information for some inmates going back to 2008.

The department's Mental Health Service Delivery System includes inmates' names and treatment information. A system that tracks inmates' financial accounts also may have been breached, and drivers' license and Social Security numbers for parolees in substance use disorder treatment programs may have also been exposed.

Investigators found in June that "someone or something entered the system without permission," but said there is no indication anyone viewed or copied the information.

Officials said they are notifying those potentially exposed now that the investigation is completed. It also set up toll-free information numbers and posted information online.

The problem was limited to one computer system and officials don't know who was responsible. They have switched to a new system with more security controls.

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